Hana to Yume COMICS

THE SCARLET CHAIR

ACT 1

MIDORIKAWA Yuki

This is a completely fictional work. Any similarities to actual people, stories, and groups are purely coincidential.

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HIRO NO ISU

THE SCARLET CHAIR

ACT 1

In a small village where a big bridge extends across it, a boy disappeared. Apart from me, very few people noticed this incident.

But there was something else that I didn't notice either.

The truth is, this village...

"Setsu, it's farewell from here on out,"

"but there will definitely be a day when my name will reach even to this village."

"When that time comes,"

"we'll meet again for sure."

chatter
chatter
SHE
SHE DID IT! SHE WON!
ONCE AGAIN, IT'S HER WIN!
PLOP
FOR THREE CONSECU-TIVE YEARS,
VICTORY HAS BEEN SETSU'S !!
WA
AAA
AA

I WON
grip
WA
A
HA
HA...
AA
A...
I WON, SO GIVE ME THE MONEY THAT YOU OWE ME, GRAMPS!
DON'T YOU BE RUDE TO ME JUST BECAUSE YOU WON!
WHY THE HELL ARE YOU BEING SO HASTY?! IT'S NOT LIKE I DIDN'T HAVE THE PRIZE MONEY BEFORE-HAND!
And call me Chief, you idiot!
Just take it, you thief!
WAAAAHHHH
Chief!
In this poor village called Niolz, it's hard to earn a lot of money
I FINALLY DID IT!
With the prize money I've gotten from winning the annual Martial Arts tournament for three consecutive years,
FINALLY ..
clench
I CAN GO SEE HIM NOW!
I begin my journey to the capital at Bazen.
I'LL BE BACK SOON
So I'll see you
You definitely have to come back.
Awwww
Na! Setsu
Don't go!
Ah!

HEH SO YOU'RE GOING TO BAZEN, HUH?
YEAH WHAT KIND OF CITY IS IT?
clatter
clatter
clatter
A VERY PROSPEROUS ONE! AND TO THINK IT WAS STILL A TOTAL WRECK A FEW YEARS AGO...
FIVE YEARS AGO, WHEN A NEW HEIR FOR THE THRONE APPEARED, THINGS BEGUN TO IMPROVE
!
IN FACT, JUST A FEW DAYS AGO, THIS HEIR SUCCEEDED THE THRONE AND BECAME THE KING!
!
WHAT'S THE NAME OF THAT PERSON?!
EH? UMM... I THINK IT WAS
...HIS MAJESTY, KING LUCARIA.
AH...
THAT'S GREAT!
GRAB
A girl!
HUG
SO HE REALLY DID IT! THAT LUCA'S REALLY SOME-THING!
MISTER, I...
I'M GOING THERE TO SEE HIM!
Luca and I grew up together

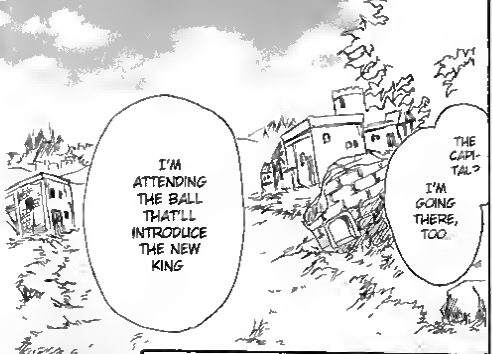
Five years ago, a man from the royal family came and took him away
He was kind and smart but somewhat distant.
...until the only one left was Luca, the son of a concubine.
According to that man, the Raji family, which was growing stronger, bigger, and greedier by the day, was killing off all who had royal blood.
I received top-secret orders to come escort you back.
If they learn of your existence, you will be in danger.
For the good of the kingdom, we have to stop them.
If this continues the Raji family will usurp and seize the throne.
I was hiding behind a tree and eavesdropping at the time, but I couldn't help jumping out in the end to voice my objection.
I STILL THINK IT WAS A LIE...
Please return to the capital with me.

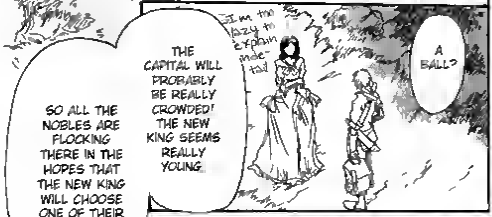
But Luca believed those claims and went with the man.
HANDS OFF YOU INSOLENT PERSON!
JUST BE GOOD AND GIVE US ALL YOUR MONEY LADY
!
LET-
SWOOSH
PUNCH
GAH!
WHACK
UGH
collapsed
ARE THEY BANDITS?
ARE YOU OKAY, MISS?

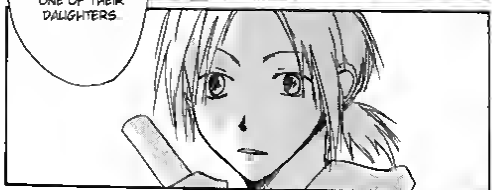
YOU KNOW, YOUR TONE OF VOICE IS VERY INTERESTING...
ha ha
GASP
...
I'M SORRY
blush...
THANK YOU FOR SAVING ME...
I GOT SEPARATED FROM MY GROUP, AND SINCE I'M NOT FAMILIAR WITH THIS PLACE I'M JUST REALLY NERVOUS...
YOU'RE REALLY CUTE
I'M SETSU
I'M KULEA
EH?
I'M GOING TO THE CAPITAL TO SEE THE NEW KING
TO BAZEN
Wait...
IT'S BECAUSE EVERYONE TEASES ME LIKE THIS THAT I GET SO NERVOUS!
HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
YOU'RE REALLY STRONG
!
I REALLY LIKE YOU
HEY, BECOME MY BODYGUARD! YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LIVE A LIFE MUCH BETTER THAN THE ONE YOU'RE LIVING NOW, YOU'LL BE GRATEFUL FOR THIS CHANCE

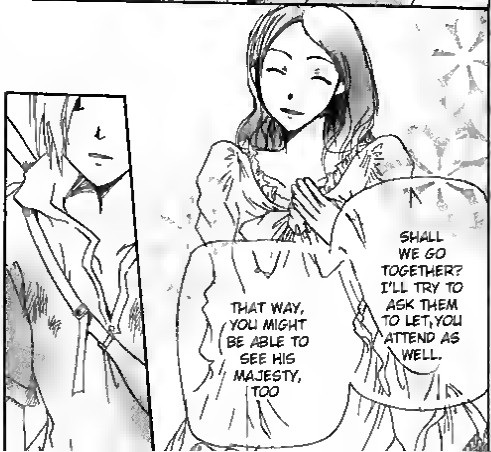
01

Hello everyone. Midorikawa here. This manga series is my memorable fifth. Yay! I feel so grateful! Every time a book comes out, I feel so deeply moved. If it was just me, I definitely would not have gotten this far. So to all my readers, the editing department, my editor, my friends, my family, and any who have helped me, thank you so much! All of you! I may be the one that's receiving all the benefits of everyone's efforts, but I'll work hard so that hopefully, one day, I'll be able to pay you all back. I'll try my best to publish some new series. This work's the first one since my debut that has managed to be free of uniforms. Stories that are set in classrooms and hallways tend to focus on the important things. But this one's different. This time, the background seems to surround the characters everywhere, so I had to struggle with that part. On the other hand, I was able to approach my work with a more relaxed attitude this way, so I still enjoyed doing the work. I hope that everyone, including readers who are not used to series where alternate worlds exist, will at least try reading this one.

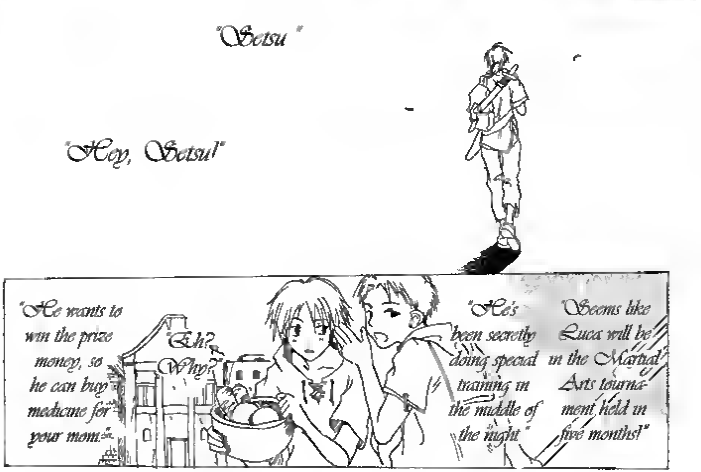






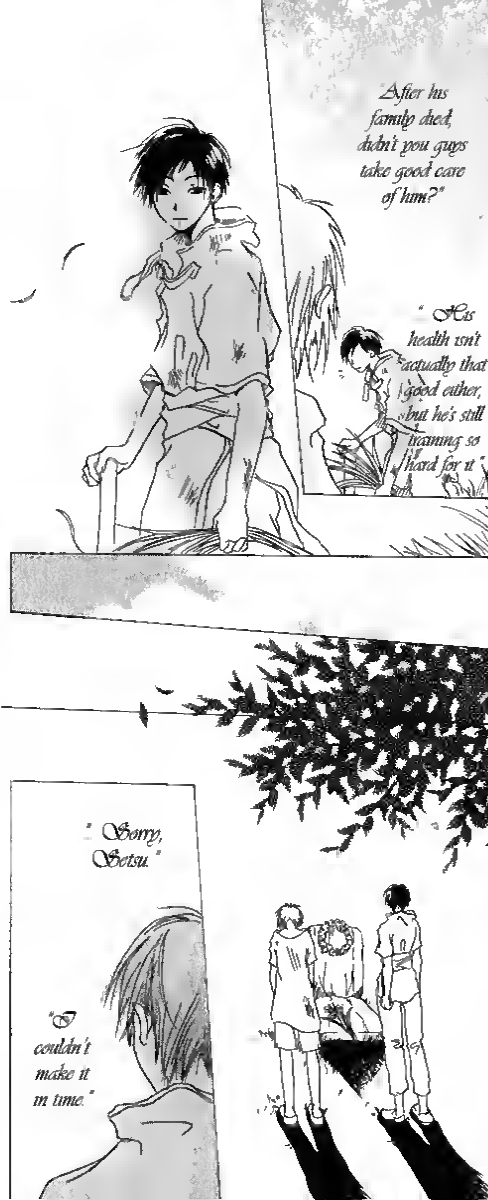


GOOD-BYE!
EH?
SETSU-
MY LADY!
MISS LUCA!
I'M SO GLAD YOU'VE SAFE!
OH, YOU GUYS FOUND ME!
JUST SEEING HIM FROM AFAR IS ENOUGH.
NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT.


"Setsu"
"Hey, Setsu!"
"He wants to win the prize money, so he can buy medicine for your mom."
"Eh? Why?"
"He's been secretly doing special training in the middle of the night."
"Seems like Luca will be in the Martial Arts tournament held in five months!"

What should I write about this time? This is part of the manga, but I can't talk too much about the story, or I might just spoil you. Umm...

Since I've only been drawing students, I've received letters from readers who were surprised that I could also draw such thing as alternate worlds. What you readers don't know is that before I started submitting my work to publishers, I used to often draw stories with sorcerers from other worlds. But, the publishers kept telling me that it was better for me to tell stories that were centered around students whose lives differed from the norm because it was perhaps more attractive in getting an editor's attention. That's why my previous series focused so much on school life. That's why I felt nostalgic when I started drawing The Scarlet Chair. Compared to when I was drawing students' uniforms, the body postures and movements of the characters in this story aren't as restricted, so I find them easier to draw. Plus, the side illustrations can also be drawn more elegantly, which is also refreshing in itself.



"I'm sorry
I couldn't do anything."
No
That's not true, Luca.
The capital,
Bazen
chatter
chatter
chatter

So he really became the King, huh.
IT'S HUGE !!
This is amazing, Luca.
IF I CAN JUST GET ONE LOOK AT HIM,
I'll be able to go back home immediately
chatter
HIS MAJESTY IS HERE!
IT'S REALLY HIS MAJESTY!
AH! HEY, LOOK AT THE BALCONY!
I got to see him already
WA A A
!
Ah.
AA
IT'S HIS MAJESTY, KING LUCARIA.

But he's someone I can't reach with only my hands
WAAAAAAA
—WH-

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!
YOU BAS-TARD
WA
AA
AAA
WAA
What...?

What's going on?!

NO! WE CAN'T DO THAT! GO BACK!

Go away you brat!

PLEASE LET ME THROUGH! I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO THE KING!

THIS ISN'T RIGHT! THAT GUY'S A FAKE!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU RANTING ABOUT?!

HEY, DRAG HER OUT!

DAMN IT! SECURITY'S TOO TIGHT AT THE CASTLE, SO I CAN'T GET IN!

WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

Anyway,

that definitely wasn't Luca.

So, who's acting as the King, then?

That man beside him was certainly the one who came to the village to get Luca. I think his name was Kazuna.

...

Then, where's Luca?
The real Luca. Where is he now .?
How can I get into the
I NEED TO THINK OF A WAY TO MEET THAT KING. SO I CAN GET A CLEAR ANSWER.
What should I do..?
How to see the King
Ah, I might be able to see His Majesty
at the ball that's one week from now!
I just have to wait a week huh.
and I need to somehow sneak into the ball
I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY...
clink...
....

AH!
YOU THIEVES OVER THERE!
WAH!
IT'S THAT KID!
LEND ME SOME MONEY!
HUH?
Money! Lend me some!
What?
Just run!
I'll definitely pay you back!
Go away
Gah!
DAMN IT! PEOPLE IN THE CITY ARE SO COLD
AND I WASTED ALL MY ENERGY FOR NO-THING
So I have to earn it huh
I'll definitely come to see you.
Wait for me Luca
...YOUR MAJESTY.
SHE FINALLY CAME.

SHE EVEN YELLED, "WHO ARE YOU?!"
"Please, let's go, Lucaria, your highness!"
"And then, you have to..."
HIYAAAA...
chop chop chop
"...become the king"

Day of the ball

Yank

DOES THIS LOOK LIKE A FORMAL DRESS...?

IF ANYONE ASKS, I'LL JUST SAY THAT THIS IS THE LATEST DESIGN!

The real question is do I even look like a woman?

Next, I'll need to snatch an invitation from a guest.

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

I KNOW IT'S WRONG, BUT THERE'S NO OTHER WAY

SETSU!

Miss?

.....

KULEA?!

I'M SORRY! THE SITUATION HAS CHANGED, SO I WANT TO SEE THE KING NOW!
JUMP
COULD YOU PLEASE BRING ME ALONG. IF ONLY TO LET ME BE YOUR BODYGUARD?
...IMPOSSIBLE.
YOU MADE THIS DRESS YOURSELF, HUH?
I'M AMAZED YOU WENT THROUGH THE TROUBLE OF DRESSING YOURSELF SO NICELY.
I'LL TELL THEM THAT YOU'RE MY FRIEND AND THEN TRY TO ASK THEM TO LET YOU THROUGH
Ah! You can just introduce me as your bodyguard.
Which one will suit you more? This wig, ribbon, or hat?
But for now, let me dress you up a lot more!

ANYWAY, WHAT'S THE MATTER, SETSU?
BUT, HELPING YOU SEEMS TO HAVE MORE MEANING FOR ME.
...
WOW THIS IS IMPRESSIVE
DIDN'T I TELL YOU? EVERY FAMILY CAME HERE PREPARED IN HOPES THAT [IT'S] DAUGHTER COULD BECOME THE QUEEN!
MY FAMILY AS WELL. MY MISSION HERE IS TO COME AND STEAL THE KING'S HEART.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
YOU'RE DIFFERENT FROM LAST TIME. I FEEL THAT YOU NOW SEEM TO BE SOMEWHAT HOSTILE TOWARD THE KING.
...I DON'T KNOW...
MISS KULEA! ♡
SE-TSU?
THAT'S WHY I WANT TO CONFIRM IT...
WITH MY OWN EYES

WHO IS THIS HANDSOME LADY OVER HERE? IS SHE AN ACQUAINTANCE OF MISS KULEA?
YES SHE'S SOMEONE WHO SAVED ME FROM DANGER ONCE
REALLY? THAT'S WONDERFUL! SUCH A BRAVE LADY!
I WONDER WHICH FAMILY SHE'S FROM
HAVE ANY OF YOU LADIES SEEN HIS MAJESTY?
NO, NOT YET HE'S PROBABLY STILL IN HIS CHAMBER.
IS THAT SO...
HM?
WHAT'S WRONG, KULEA?
AH, IT'S NOTHING
I'D REALLY LOVE TO DANCE WITH YOU ONCE, BUT
I HAVE TO GO NOW
OH...
THEN, TAKE CARE!
I'M REALLY HAPPY I MET YOU
LIKE YOU,
SOMEDAY, I'LL ALSO BE ABLE TO DO THINGS MY WAY.

I WISH YOU LUCK, SETSU
THANK YOU, KULEA

SECURITY SEEMS SO LOOSE HERE
Anyway, I should first look for the King's chamber
FLASHBACK
"Beware the blue dress"
Which one ?
THIS WAY, PLEASE
HIS MAJESTY IS WAITING

WHERE IS HE?
CREAK
THE REAL LUCA.
WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED?
ARE YOU GOING TO TELL ME, KAZLINA?
KAZLINA, PLEASE LEAVE US.
!

I HAVE A FEELING I'VE MET YOU SOME-WHERE BEFORE...
WHO ARE YOU...?

...SINCE I ALSO ONCE LIVED IN THAT VILLAGE OF YOURS
IT'S POSSIBLE THAT WE HAVE MET BEFORE...

CLOSE...

...AND WHY I'M SITTING ON THE KING'S THRONE.

...IN NIOLZ?

WHO I AM...
YOU'RE "SETSU", RIGHT? I'LL TELL YOU EVERY-THING...

I used to live under the large bridge of a small, poor village.

He was the only person who ever cared about me, my only friend, and I will always be grateful to him.

One day, as I was looking up toward the bridge, I saw him with a well-dressed man as they were about to cross the bridge

"...Luca."

The man who was with him reluctantly agreed, and so the three of us continued on the journey
"Lua-sama!!"
It's OK It's OK
Who is this guy?
And where are we going, Lua?
SPLASH
SPLASH
(We can't bring you along with you looking like that
gobble gobble
munch
munch
struggle
flail
flail
My eyes The soap went in! Gah! Stop it!!
Lua! Help me!
chew properly at least
I'D RATHER BE YOUR SHIELD
Perhaps he just felt like it or maybe he was lonely,
he decided to bring along me a boy of his age with no family and trembling from hunger
...YOU'RE A LOT LIKE SETSU.

I LEFT SOMETHING PRECIOUS THERE
HUH
AFTER I'M DONE WITH THINGS AT THE CAPITAL,
I PLAN ON RETURNING TO THAT VILLAGE
CHILDHOOD FRIEND
SETSU?
AH
NO PLACE TO RETURN TO
NOT EVEN A PERSON TO WAIT FOR ME
NOTHING AT ALL
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING IN THAT VILLAGE
HE BROUGHT ME OUT HERE, AND HE GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO SEE ALL THAT
AS WE JOURNEYED TO THE CAPITAL, EVERYTHING I SAW ALONG THE WAY WAS NEW AND BEAUTIFUL
IS THAT SO

SORRY. I'M JUST GONNA DRINK SOME WATER FROM THE RIVER DOWN THERE.
HEY, ARE YOU OK?
ONCE WE REACH THE CAPITAL, WE'LL TAKE YOU TO A DOCTOR....
cough
cough
cough
cough
cough
FOR LUCA, I THOUGHT I COULD DO ANY-THING.
But...
when we were almost in sight of the capital...
...

YOU'RE LUCARIA, RIGHT?
RUSTLE
cough

STAB
KAZUNA, I LEAVE HIS MAJESTY TO YOU...
LU-
DON'T COME OVER!!
PLEASE RUN AWAY, LUCA-SAMA!
?!
DON'T

AND...
YOU MUST ...
PFT!
cough
cough
...BECOME THE KING...
SO THAT ONE IS LUCARIA !
collapse...
GR
AB
?!
KAZUNA?!
dash
LUCA

THAT WOUND I'M AFRAID IT'S ALREADY...
LET GO OF ME, KAZUNA!
HURRY UP AND GO BACK TO SAVE LUCA...!
...THAT WAS ONE OF BAJI'S ASSASSINS...
Whoosh
HAH...
HAH...
WHAT DO YOU STILL NOT UNDERSTAND?!
LUCARIA-SAMA!
LUCA IS-
HURRY AND GO BACK!!
PLEASE DECIDE, YOUR HIGHNESS.
WILL YOU RETURN TO THE CAPITAL WITH ME? BECAUSE...
...IF YOU'RE GONNA INSIST THAT THE ONE I ABANDONED JUST NOW WAS HIS HIGHNESS, THEN...

I WILL COMMIT SUICIDE RIGHT HERE. RIGHT NOW.
HOW CAN I DO THAT KIND OF THING?!
WHOO
FURTHER-MORE,
LUCA'S DEFINITELY STILL ALIVE...
THAT'S WH-
ARE YOU SERI-OUS?
I HAVE TO PRETEND TO BE LUCA ...?
THAT'S ...!
THAT'S WHY WE MUST PROTECT HIS POSI-TION!
I KNOW I'M JUST DECIDING THIS ON MY OWN,
BUT IN ANY CASE...
HE ALSO THINKS THE SAME, SO THAT'S WHY HE SAID THAT JUST THEN...
WE DEFINITELY CAN'T ALLOW THE BAJI FAMILY TO TAKE THE THRONE.
SO THAT ONE DAY HE CAN RETURN TO US.

WH
OOSH
I NEED YOU TO GO TO THE CAPITAL WITH ME.
...AND AFTER THAT, I GAVE IT MY ALL.
DEALING WITH THE SCHEMES OF THE BAJI FAMILY, PERSUADING HIGH OFFICIALS TO SIDE WITH ME
I HAVE HAD ONLY ONE GOAL, AND THAT IS...
...TO PROTECT THE THRONE.

WHILE HE RETURNED

TO WHERE "SETSU" WAS WAITING FOR HIM

CONTINUE TO LIVE THE LIFE HE ONCE HAD

SO HE COULD HAPPILY

NEVER ONCE HAVE I THOUGHT THAT HE IS DEAD

SO HE COULD SEND HOMELESS ME TO THE CAPITAL,

I'VE OFTEN THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS HE JUST PRETENDED TO DIE ON PURPOSE,

HE'S DEFINITELY STILL RECOVERING OUT THERE SOMEWHERE,

AND SOMEDAY, HE'LL MAKE HIS WAY BACK HERE

WITH HIS MIND SET ON COMING TO THIS CASTLE

BUT ALAS,

THAT IS NOT THE CASE

UNTIL THEN, I WILL DEFEND THIS THRONE.
BECAUSE AT THAT TIME, I COULDN'T BECOME HIS SHIELD.

At a small village where a big bridge extends across it, a boy disappeared.

But, the truth is that two people

...disappeared from that village.

THERE'S NO NEED TO SEE ME OFF.
BUT WHERE'S KAZUNA?
HE RAN AWAY
HUH?
HE'S HIDING SOMEWHERE IN THE CASTLE
HE SAID HE DOESN'T HAVE THE GUTS TO FACE YOU
ACTUALLY, KAZUNA WAS THE ONE WHO COULDN'T BEAR TO LEAVE LUCA BEHIND.
BUT TO HELP ME, HE HAS ENDURED IT UNTIL NOW.
IF YOU SHOULD HATE ANYONE HATE ME.
I'M FINE, SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. HURRY UP AND GO ALREADY.
EVERY ONE IS WAITING.
JUST KEEP WALKING STRAIGHT DOWN THIS WAY, AND YOU'LL SEE THE EXIT.
YOU KNOW, YOU'RE REALLY EASY-GOING.
ARE YOU REALLY JUST GOING BACK LIKE THIS?
YEAH, I RAN OUT OF MONEY.
Not even enough left for souvenirs
Clink
Clink
Your dress has a pocket?
WANT ME TO LEND YOU SOME?
YOU IDIOT DON'T USE CITIZENS' TAXES FOR PERSONAL REASONS!
WELL I'M GOING BACK TO THE VILLAGE FIRST.
I'LL SAVE UP SOME MONEY.
AND THEN I'LL GO ON ANOTHER JOURNEY.
NO MATTER HOW THINGS WILL TURN OUT, I WANT TO GO LOOK FOR LUCA.

HOW EXACTLY ARE THE TWO OF US ALIKE?
I GUESS IT'S PERHAPS OUR BELIEF THAT ANYTHING WILL BE POSSIBLE AS LONG AS WE DO IT?
THANK YOU FOR TELLING ME EVERY-THING
ONE DAY, WHEN YOUR WORK HERE IS DONE,
RETURN TO THAT VILLAGE.
...BECAUSE I'LL BE WAITING
GOODBYE, YOUR MAJESTY.

!
GASP
...WAS I TOO SOFT ON HER?
A blue dress!

She knows my secret, but I'm just letting her leave like that.
Perhaps I'll regret it someday.
She sounded like she was trembling
"Goodbye, Your Majesty."
SWOOSH
CLANG
?!

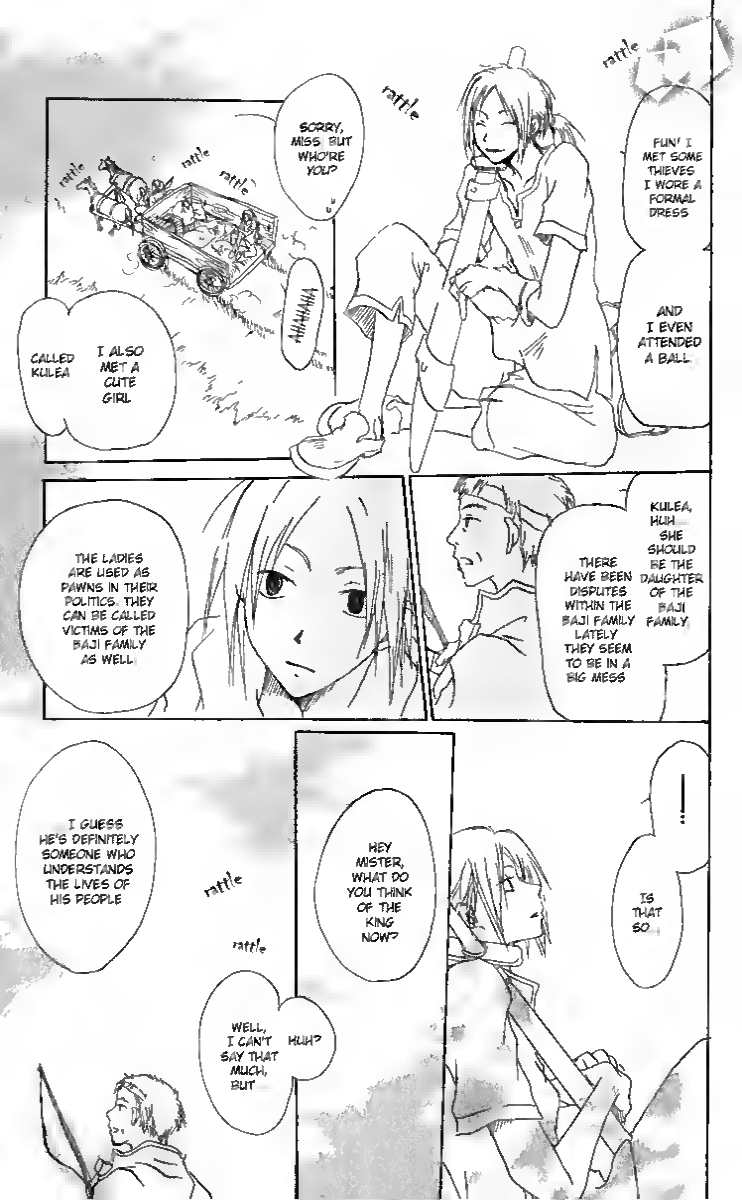
SETSU ?!
IS THIS GUY AN ASSAS-SIN?
!!
STAGGER
CLANG
CRASH
swish
!

I WON'T LET ANYONE TAKE AWAY
THE KING'S THRONE!
NOR THIS "LUCARIA'S" LIFE!

PLEASE LEAVE, SETSU.
YOU'LL DEFINITELY FIND HIM.
YEAH.

Definitely!
!
HIS MAJESTY
I'LL LEAVE HIM TO YOU

...return to that village...
Someday, I will...
...because I left something precious there
HOW WAS BAZEN, MISS?
HMM...?


rattle
rattle
rattle
rattle
rattle
SORRY, MISS BUT WHO'RE YOU?
FUN! I MET SOME THIEVES I WORE A FORMAL DRESS
AND I EVEN ATTENDED A BALL
CALLED KULEA
I ALSO MET A CUTE GIRL
THE LADIES ARE USED AS PAWNS IN THEIR POLITICS. THEY CAN BE CALLED VICTIMS OF THE BAJI FAMILY AS WELL.
KULEA, HUH... SHE SHOULD BE THE DAUGHTER OF THE BAJI FAMILY.
THERE HAVE BEEN DISPUTES WITHIN THE BAJI FAMILY LATELY. THEY SEEM TO BE IN A BIG MESS
!
IS THAT SO...
HEY MISTER, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE KING NOW?
HUH?
WELL, I CAN'T SAY THAT MUCH, BUT...
rattle
rattle
I GUESS HE'S DEFINITELY SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTANDS THE LIVES OF HIS PEOPLE

...BY THE WAY, MISS, DID YOU MANAGE TO SEE HIS MAJESTY, LUCARIA?
Protect that scarlet chair and the people it represents
He'll definitely be able to protect it 'til the end, right?
...I SEE.
YEAH
AH!
I FORGOT TO ASK HIS NAME.
EH? WHOSE NAME?

The Scarlet Chair

by Midorikawa Yuki

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Hana to Yume COMICS

THE SCARLET CHAIR

MIDORIKAWA Yuki 1

Hana to Yume COMICS

THE SCARLET CHAIR 〔1〕

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Hana to Yume COMICS

SUMMARY

Setsu, a young girl from the poor village of Niolz, goes to the capital to search for her childhood friend, Luca. He left the village five years ago because, seeing as how he was the king's illegitimate son, he was to be the king's successor... But when Setsu went to see him again, the person who appeared before her was...?! It's a striking, mysterious fantasy!!

Serialized in LALA

白泉社

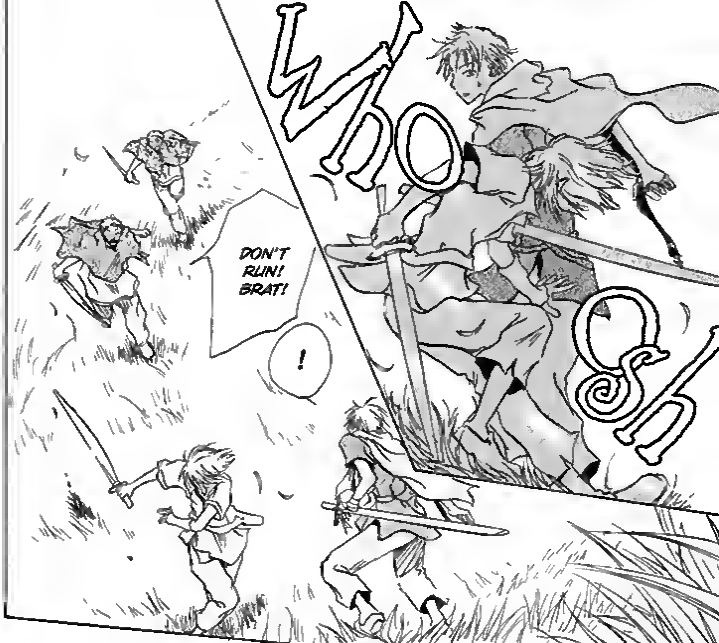
SUMMARY

Setsu, a young girl who grew up in the poor village of Niolz, goes to the capital to search for her childhood friend, Luca. He left the village five years ago because, seeing as how he was the king's illegitimate son, he was to be the king's successor. Setsu was happy to hear that Luca had become the king, but when she saw the king with her own eyes, he was...?! A mysterious fantasy series, its plot revolves around the king's throne, which is also known as the "Scarlet Chair"!!

THE SCARLET CHAIR
ACT 2

...is that blood-red scarlet chair

SCRAPE
spin
spin
gasp
MY HAND SLIPPED !
I'M SO SORRY!
HUH?!
THUD


Whoosh
DON'T RUN! BRAT!
!

EH? BAD GUYS?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO HELP!
rush

THUD
THUD
I'M SO SORRY I GOT YOU INVOLVED!
THE THIEVES HIT THE SWORD OUT OF MY HAND...
I'M SETSU FROM NIOLZ VILLAGE
YOU'RE PRETTY SKILLFUL TRAVELING ALONE?
I'M DORII FROM BERKAN VILLAGE
YEAH.
I'M LOOKING FOR AN OLD FRIEND OF MINE.
growl

Gobble Gobble
THANK YOU, DORII!
YOU ARE MY SAVIOR.
groowwwwa
ah...
I HAVEN'T EATEN IN THREE DAYS I FEEL SO GIDDY AFTER ALL THAT EXERTION JUST NOW...
COLLAPSE
IT'S NOTHING DON'T HOLD BACK
I HAVEN'T DINED WITH OTHERS IN A LONG TIME IT'S A PLEASURE
BESIDES, I HAVE LOTS OF MONEY TO SPARE...
REALLY
That's good.
IS HE A THIEF?
BUT ISN'T IT TOO RASH TO GO ON A JOURNEY WITHOUT MONEY?
WHAT KIND OF PERSON ARE YOU, THEN?
You're an amateur
NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY YOUR SWORDSMANSHIP IS FAST BUT LACKING TECHNIQUE
SO IT'S A JOURNEY TO FIND A PERSON, HUH...

IT'S SO AWFUL, IT'S NOT EVEN FUNNY!

YOU ARE ALSO GOING TOWARD FUKA CITY?

YEAH! WHEN LUCA WAS YOUNGER, A LADY WHO LIVED IN FUKA CITY ONCE VISITED HIS MOTHER.

I WANT TO TALK TO HER AND SEE IF SHE HAS ANY LEADS

"LUCA?" IS THAT THE NAME OF THE PERSON YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

YEP!

THE CHANCES OF HIM STILL BEING ALIVE ARE VERY SMALL,

Luca left the village in order to succeed the throne.

Five years ago,

BUT I CAN'T JUST SIT AROUND AND DO NOTHING.

He only told this to me.

He told me everything quietly.
About how Luca brought his pitiful homeless self along on the journey...
...and also...
...about how Luca was ambushed along the way...
...and disappeared under a small bridge in a small town...
SE-TSU...
But when I went to visit him after five years,
it was an entirely different boy...
...who had taken on the name "Lucaria" and succeeded the king's throne.

WAH!
SLIP
dazed
Moreover...
SETSU!
AH!
CARE-FUL...
EH?
!
THAT'S DANGER-OUS...
SQUEEZE
?!

jerk

A GIRL!

oops...

Splash

ROLL ROLL ROLL ROLL ROLL ROLL

...I'M SORRY! I didn't notice...

You caught me off guard

IT'S OKAY

Moreover,

the ones who now remain, Kazuna and "him,"

are continuing Luca's will by guarding that scarlet chair...

as they wait for "his" return...

YOUR MAJESTY...

YOUR MAJESTY!

Startle

DID YOU HEAR WHAT I JUST SAID?

AH, NO

SORRY PLEASE REPEAT IT.

YOU SHOULD REST FOR A WHILE

EVER SINCE SETSU CAME, YOU'VE BEEN LESS ALERT.

I'LL COME BACK AFTER HALF AN HOUR

KAZU-N...

WHAT'S WRONG?

NO-THING

NOTHING MUCH

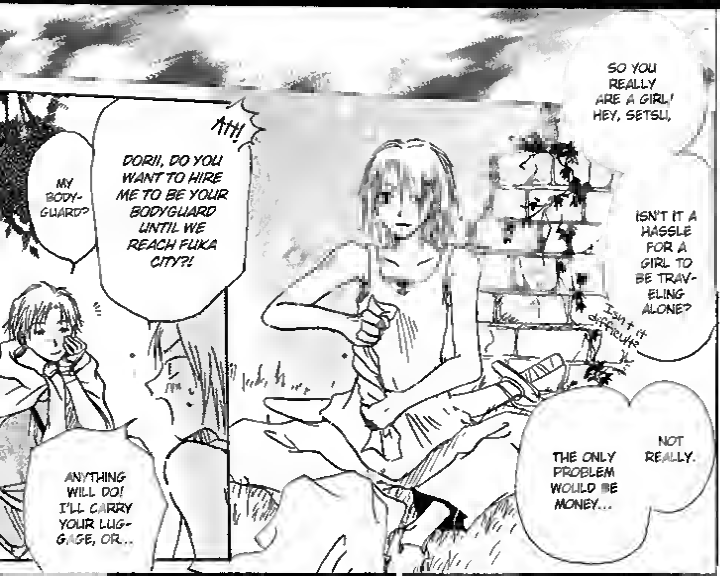
SETSU, WAIT FOR ME A WHILE LONGER.

I'M ALMOST DONE WITH MY WORK. LET'S GO BACK TO-GETHER

I'LL WAIT FOR YOU ANYTIME
OH, SO YOU ALREADY KNOW...
LUCA, I HEAR YOU'RE GOING TO JOIN THE MARTIAL ARTS TOURNAMENT. ARE YOU REALLY?
ALMOST ALL THE PARTICIPANTS ARE ADULTS. IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!
I'VE BEEN PRACTICING WITH MY SWORD LATELY. I WANT TO TEST MY SKILLS
DON'T BLUFF!
KOU SAID YOU'RE DOING IT TO HELP MY MOTHER BUY HER MEDICINE. THAT'S WHY YOU WANT TO WIN THE PRIZES...
THAT BLABBER-MOUTH...
DON'T WORRY, SETSU!
I WON'T FIGHT A BATTLE THAT I HAVE NO CHANCE OF WINNING
AS FOR YOU, I'LL TEACH YOU SOME SWORD SKILLS!

REALLY?
My so happy huh?
Yeah!
IN THIS CHAOTIC WORLD, IT'S SOMETHING THAT'LL ALWAYS BE OF SOME HELP
I ORIGINALLY THOUGHT THAT AS LONG AS I WAS BY YOUR SIDE, THAT WOULD BE ENOUGH
BUT YOU AREN'T THE TYPE WHO'D WANT OTHERS TO ALWAYS BE PROTECTING YOU, HUH?
THAT'S RIGHT!
WELL, THERE ARE CERTAIN SPECIAL WAYS TO SWING THE SWORD
SETSU, WATCH CAREFULLY!
AND ALWAYS ...

"...remember this."



THIS WAS AN UNSTABLE ERA TO BEGIN WITH
THAT'S EXCITING!
He has a warrior's training, huh.
THERE'S SOMEONE WHOSE HEAD I WANT NO MATTER WHAT
THEN,
LET'S HAVE A FIGHT!
IF I WIN,
YOU'LL HAVE TO ACCEPT MY UNREASONABLE DEMANDS TO TRAVEL WITH YOU UNTIL FUKA CITY
No matter how small the chances are.
HOW WOULD YOU KNOW WHEN YOU HAVEN'T TRIED?
THAT'S INTERESTING I LIKE STRONG PEOPLE
BUT, SETSU
YOU BETTER NOT PICK A FIGHT YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T WIN.

I need to hold on to them tightly

OKAY! LET'S DO IT!

DORII, YOUR SWORD IS VERY LONG AND THIN.

YEP.

BUT IT'S A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD.

IF YOU MAKE ME UNSHEATHE MY SWORD, I WON'T HAVE MERCY ON YOU!

THAT'S WHY I TRY MY HARDEST TO USE A SHEATHED SWORD INSTEAD.

...IT'LL BREAK.

Look, it's fixed up!

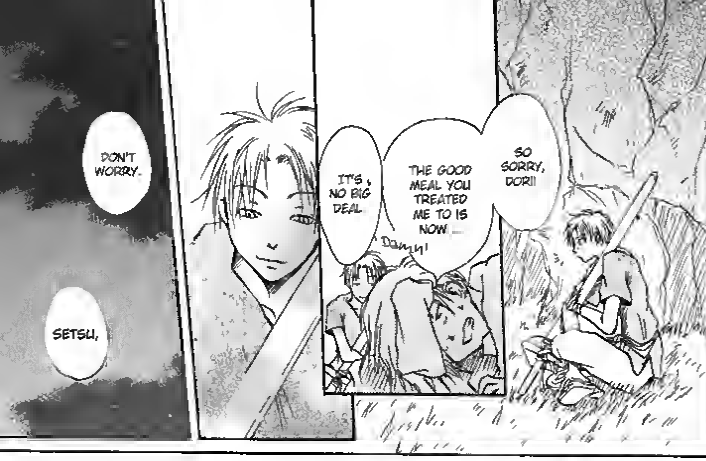
Your sword has a back edge, right?

OK, LET'S START.

SH
SH
CLA
CLACK
clink
!
SWISH
WHOOSH

whoosh
clatter
HA!
HA!
CLASH
CLASH
!
gasp

AH...
WAH!
SORRY! I...
UGH
BLARGH
WAH... I'M SO SORRY! SETSU!


DON'T WORRY.
SETSU,
IT'S NO BIG DEAL
THE GOOD MEAL YOU TREATED ME TO IS NOW...
Damn!
SO SORRY, DOR!!

LET'S GO TO FUKA CITY TOGE-THER.
YEAH ...
I HOPE YOU CAN FIND HIM

would he have stayed by my side..?

Or if I were weaker,

would Luca have taken me along with him?

If I were stronger,

THANKS ...

"The kid living under the bridge?"

"But,"

"only Luca would take care of him on a regular basis."

"He probably couldn't leave him behind."

...That's why Luca brought him along when he left.

"Now that you mention it, there seems to be such a person."

"All skinny and dirty."

"Rumors say that he probably escaped from the hands of slave traders and ended up settling over there."

"Since he's good-looking, people sometimes go disturb him."

❀ Mangaka's note

To be honest I'm not very good at choosing titles for my creations. It's because it concerns the whole atmosphere and feeling of the story. Wah! I'm thinking too much! And I can't drag the story for too long. So, I usually decide on the title first. Sometimes I can't come up with anything, so I think about using a temporary one for the sake of it. But my editor would have no such thoughts, so he would give me encouragement in such times. Seeing as how I tend to gauge the success of a series by its lineup, I also often remind myself that the title is a key element in the success of a manga. Below, I've written the rejected title of tankoubons in the past and the reasons for their rejection. Can you all recognize which titles belong to which series?

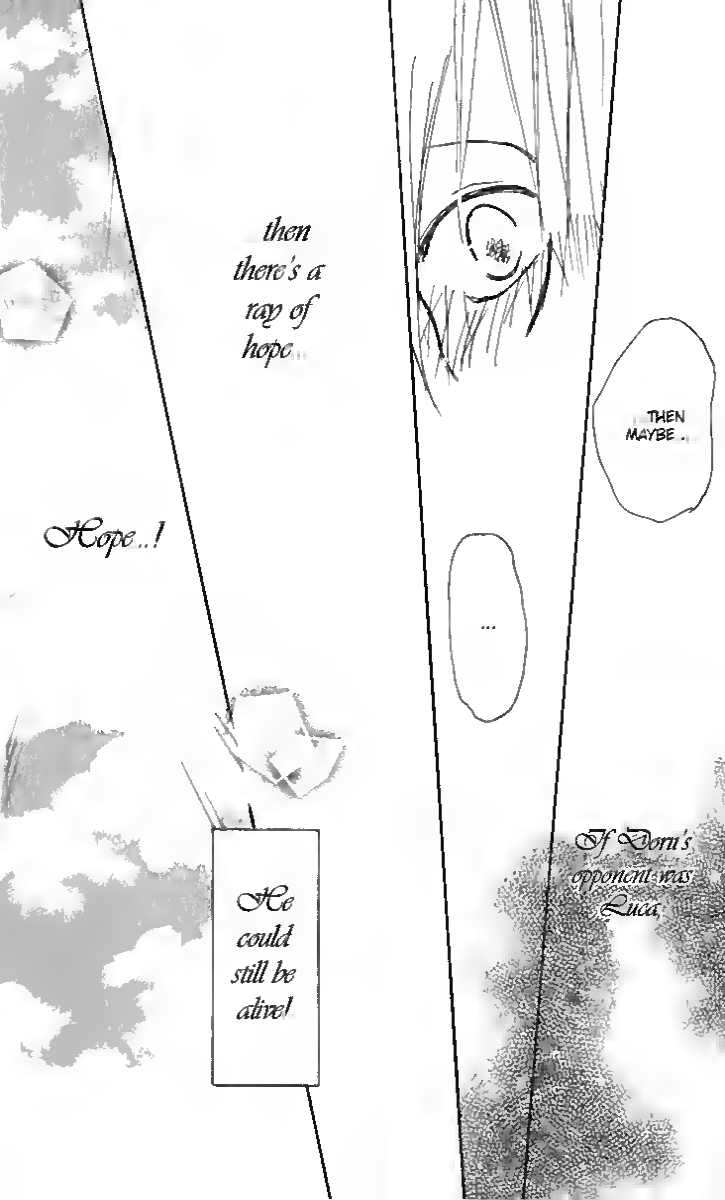
A Hana wo Sugomu Mono
B Kuroi Mizu
C. Hitojichi X
D Mukuchi no Ryuu
E Techou to Satsui

Seeing it in a list, I feel that the effect is not good.

A Hanadorubou
B Koohii Hirari
C. Namae no Nai Kyaku
D Akaku Saku Koe
E Atsui Hibi

HEY, DORII.
WHEN YOU'RE FEELING HURT ON YOUR OWN,
IF ONLY ONE PERSON GIVES YOU A HELPING HAND, WOULD YOU THEN RISK YOUR LIFE FOR THAT PERSON?
SUDDEN AMBUSH
EH? WHO ARE YOU REFERRING TO? IF IT WAS YOU, WOULD YOU?
I WOULD!
Clack
SMACK
WHACK
AH!
IF THAT'S SO, I'D LIKE TO PERHAPS TURN THE TABLES ONE DAY AND SHOW HIM WHAT I'VE GOT!
I WOULD FEEL LIKE I'M BEING PITIED UPON
BUT IF IT WAS ME,
BUT I FEEL LIKE I REMEMBER SOMETHING ..
HUH? WHAT?
Wah! My stomach's growling. Let's go eat!
YOU'RE REALLY WEIRD

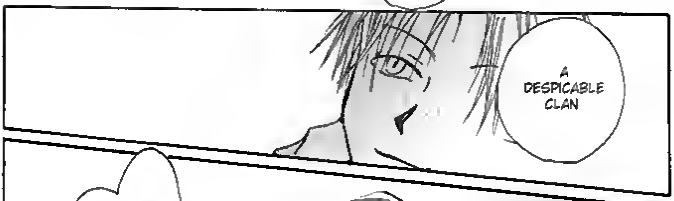
WHAT?! WHEN?! WHERE?!
AH...
I THINK I MAY HAVE ENCOUNTERED SOMEWHERE...
IT'S ONLY A FEELING, THOUGH
AS TO WHEN AND WHO I'VE FOUGHT, I CAN'T REMEMBER ANY OF THAT
LUCA TAUGHT ME MY SWORD-FIGHTING SKILLS
...A PERSON WITH SIMILAR SWORD-FIGHTING SKILLS AS YOU, WHO I GOT INTO A FIGHT WITH...
IF WHAT YOU SAID HAPPENED IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS


then there's a ray of hope...
Hope..!
He could still be alive!
...THEN MAYBE..
...
If Dorn's opponent was Luca,

THIS AREA IS THE BAJI CLAN'S TERRITORY
IT REALLY IS THRIVING
Wah
Fuka City, Etonils
BAJI?!
WAH! WHAT A HUGE REACTION DO YOU HAVE A GRUDGE AGAINST THEM?
...LUCA'S DISAPPEARANCE SEEMS TO BE LINKED TO THE BAJI CLAN
THE PEOPLE OF THAT CLAN ARE DISHONORABLE...
LOOK!
THAT'S THEIR FLAG CREST
DID YOU KNOW THAT THE KING'S FLAG CREST IS A DOUBLE-HEADED BIRD?
YEAH.

IT'S RUMORED THAT LONG AGO,
IN ORDER TO LET A CERTAIN MAN ASCEND TO THE THRONE, THERE WAS AN ORGANIZATION WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES
WHEN THE MAN BECAME KING, TO SHOW THE ORGANIZATION'S TRIUMPH,
HE DESIGNED THE BLACK AND WHITE BIRD CREST

THE PEOPLE OF THE BAJI FAMILY BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE THE INFLUENCE BEHIND THE BLACK BIRD.
THEREFORE,
THEY BELIEVE THAT THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO SIT IN THE SCARLET CHAIR THEMSELVES.


A DESPICABLE CLAN

IN THE BAJI FAMILY

AH! HERE WE ARE!
HUH?
...I HAVE A FRIEND
A VERY PRETTY YOUNG LADY...
HERE...? SO YOU WERE LOOKING FOR LADY KIRA?
HUH? IS SHE FAMOUS?
SHE WAS ONCE A BEAUTIFUL SWORD FIGHTER.
I HEARD SHE HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE MILITARY.
SHE'S A RATHER PROMINENT FIGURE.
How very interesting
I'M HERE TO ASK HER WHY SHE WENT DOWN THERE...
WHY WOULD SUCH AN IMPORTANT PERSON GO TO NIOLZ VILLAGE?
WHAT WAS LUCA'S MOTHER LIKE?
Why she went to Niolz village

DIDN'T I TELL YOU ALREADY? THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
PETTY BASTARD!
Step
step
I'M GONNA FIND OUT HOW TO INFILTRATE THE PLACE
OI...
WHAT?
NO! GO AWAY!
UNWORTHY PEOPLE LIKE YOU CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO SEE LADY KIRA!
NOT EVERYTHING MAY TURN OUT TO BE THE WAY YOU WANT IT TO...
WHAT IF...
SETSU, AREN'T YOU AFRAID OF FINDING OUT THE TRUTH?
...THE INFORMATION SHE HAS TURNS OUT TO BE BAD NEWS WHAT WOULD YOU DO, THEN?

EVEN SO,

I WOULD STILL WANT TO KNOW

NO MAT-TER...

WHAT HAPPENED TO LUCA

BUT IF HE'S ALONE NOW,

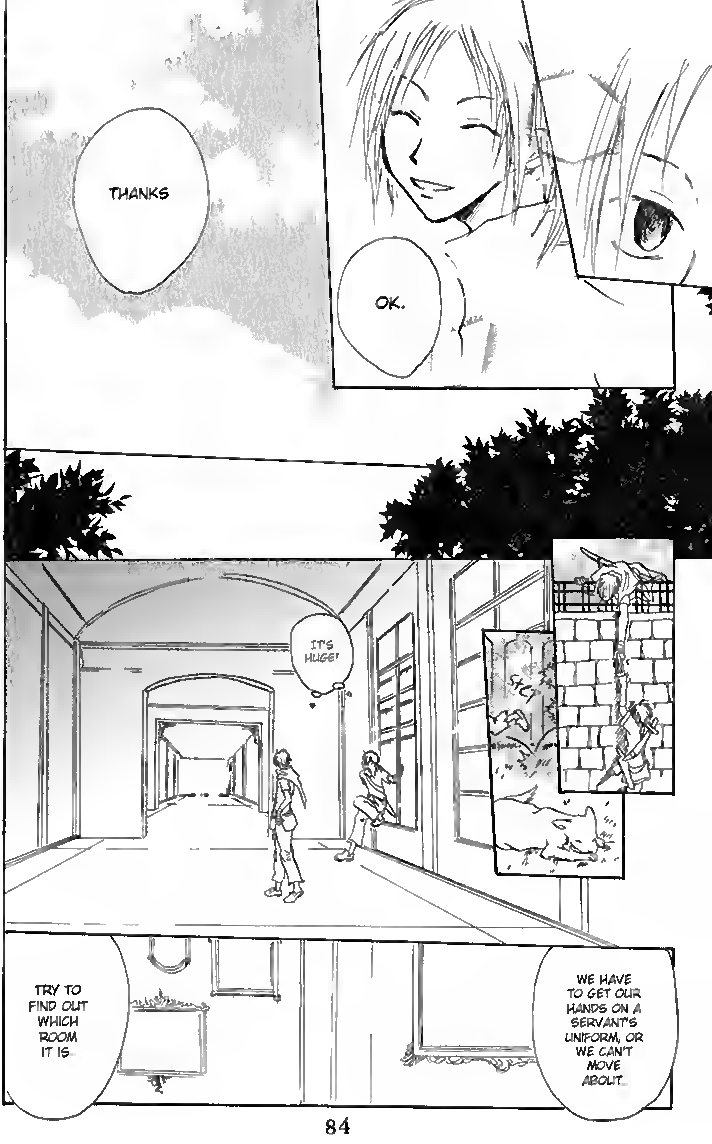
THEN I MUST RACE TO HIS SIDE.

SUCH A WORTHY YOUNG MAN I WOULD LIKE TO MEET HIM SOMEDAY.

LET'S GO TO THE WEST SIDE AND TAKE A LOOK

IF IT'S ONLY A FENCE, WE COULD TRY GETTING OVER IT

WILL YOU COME WITH ME AGAIN?


THANKS
OK.
IT'S HUGE!
SIGH
TRY TO FIND OUT WHICH ROOM IT IS...
WE HAVE TO GET OUR HANDS ON A SERVANT'S UNIFORM, OR WE CAN'T MOVE ABOUT...

Mangaka's Note

Whenever I was coming up with materials or settings for the story, I'd be listening to music, or I'd be on the bus or cycling around. That's why music is so important to me. Whether there are lyrics or not, I try to listen to it often, so I could increase my number of favorite tracks. In general, I prefer those with a country blues flavor. I also like ballads and music that move you. People often send music that they had composed themselves to me, which make me very happy, and I appreciate it very much. Thank you everybody. If you have any music to recommend, please tell me.

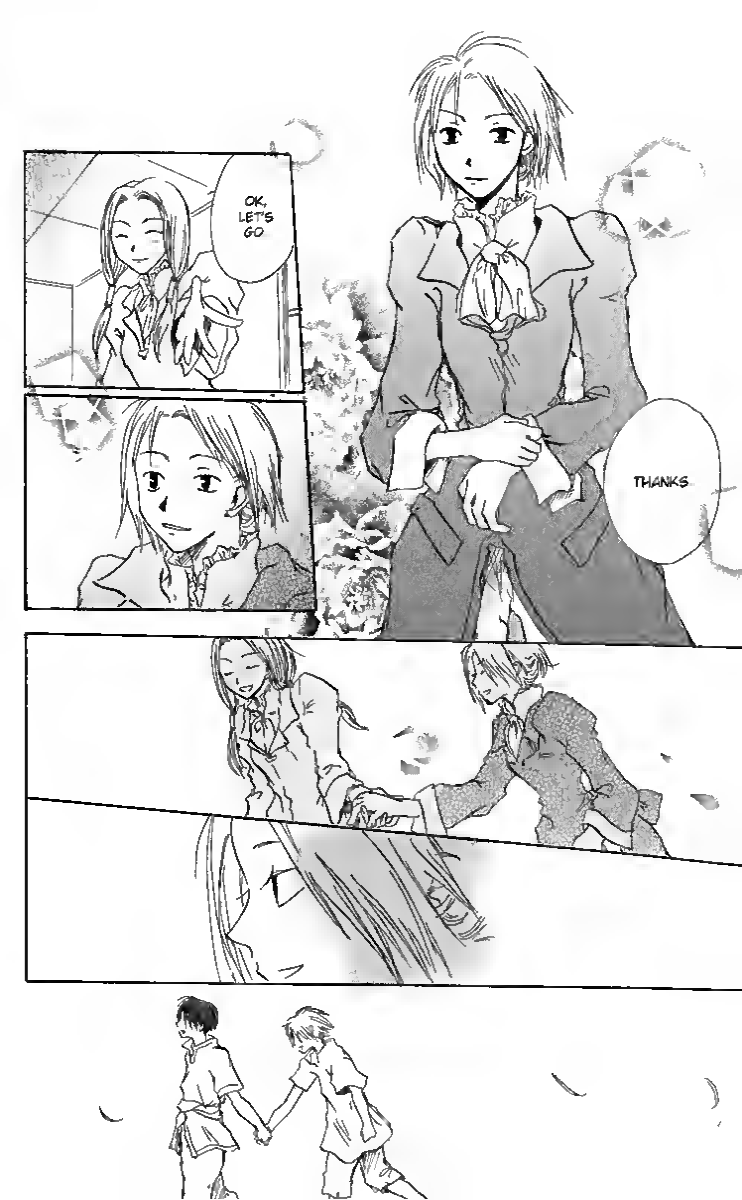
About the designs and patterns pasted into the background, perhaps no one noticed, but I use different styles to paste the stickers for different manga. Actually the style is almost the same, but in this manga I used a particular type more often, and in another manga I use a different kind more often. Colors are separated into the light, mixed, and black categories and are used in different sections. Even though there's a little difference, making slight changes to the effect is a joy in itself. However, The Scarlet Chair is one, when compared to the others, that has nothing special to it.

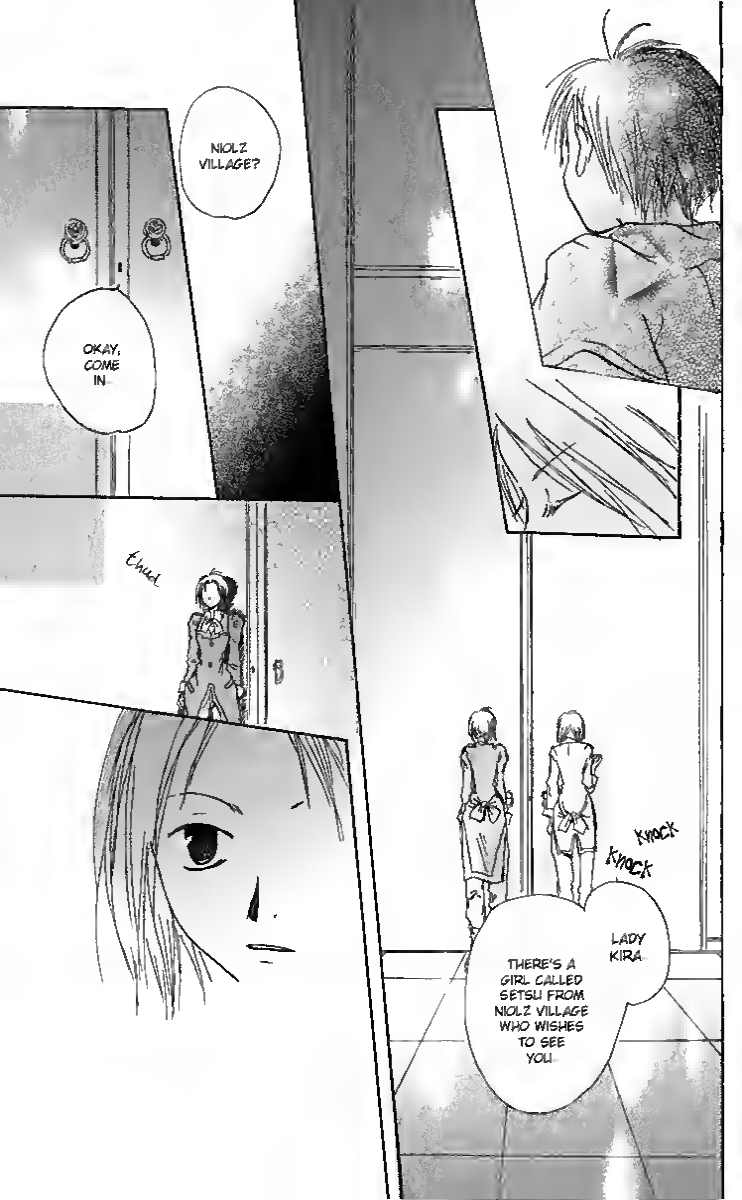
...DORII, YOU'RE GONNA WEAR THAT?
YOU MUST BE JOKING! DON'T SCARE ME TO DEATH...
WHAT A CUTE GIRL, I CAN'T ATTACK HER
IF YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOAL, YOU CAN'T HAVE ANY MERCY
HEY!
No way!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE?
WHO ARE Y-
gasp
AH!
!

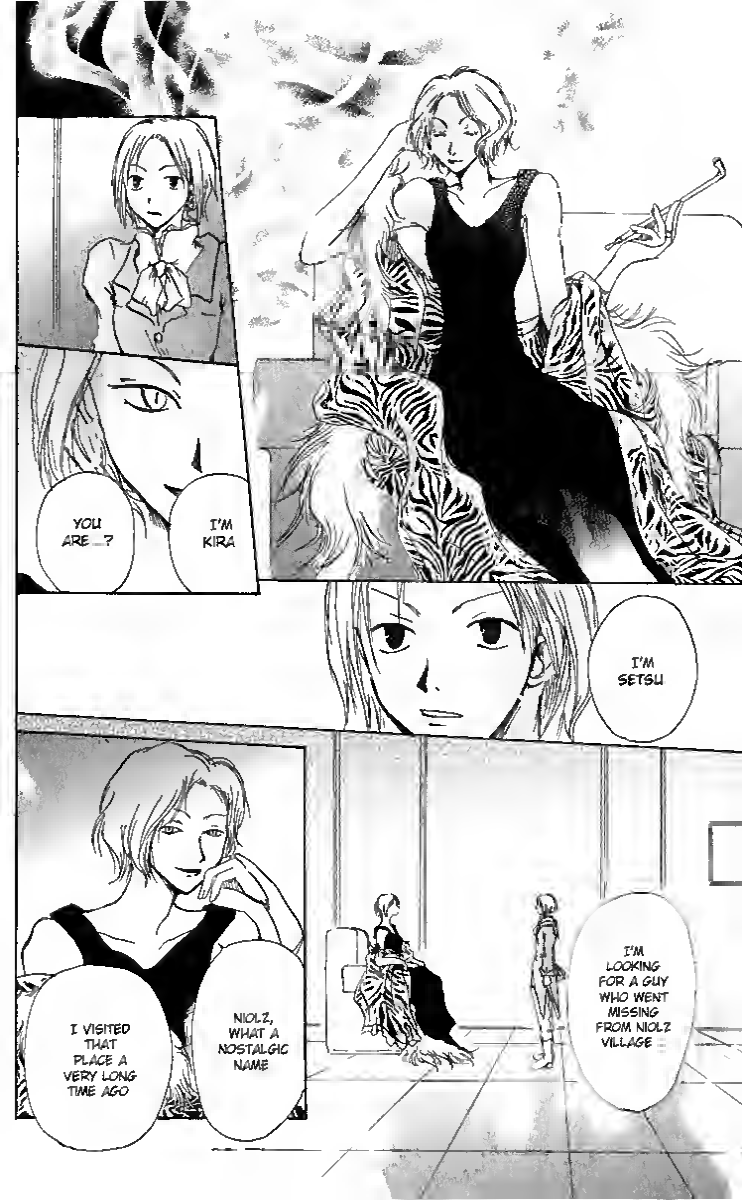
CRASH!
DOR!!!
EH?
SETSU?
OW
HUH?
Get off of me!
WAH!
JUMP
SORRY! WE WERE TOO ROUGH
HUH...? RAN?

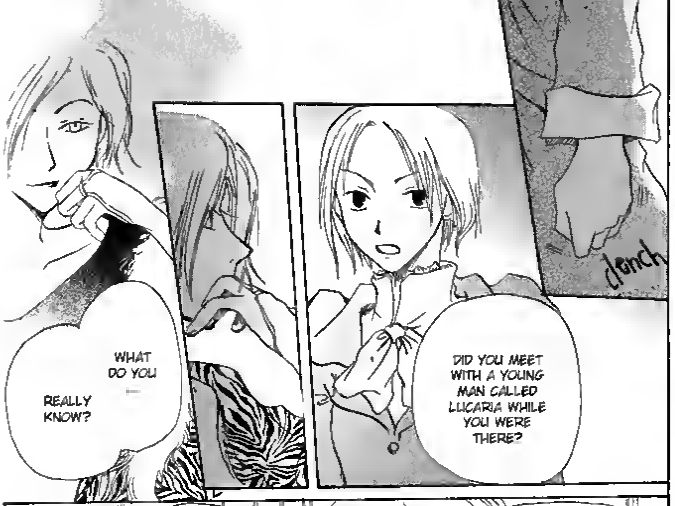
WE WERE FROM THE SAME VILLAGE
YOU KNOW HER?
COME IN, THIS IS MY ROOM
HE'S MY SAVIOR
YOUR BOY-FRIEND?
SETSU, YOU ARE STILL AS RASH AS EVER.
REALLY? YOU SNEAKED IN JUST TO SEE LADY KIRA?
WE'LL HAVE TO IMPROVE OUR SECURITY.
I HAVE SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK HER
SHE ISN'T SOMEONE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO MEET EASILY
YEAH!
SOME SPECIAL REA-SON?

BUT IF YOU SCREW UP, I'M NOT GOING TO BOTHER ABOUT YOU ANYMORE. IF YOU'RE REJECTED, YOU HAVE TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.
ONE MORE THING,
HOWEVER, SHE'S NOT UNWILLING TO LISTEN TO PEOPLE.
RAN!
muss
muss
Your gender is questionable.
GO CHANGE INTO PROPER CLOTHES
LOOK AT YOU!
UH
I'll just take an afternoon nap
YOU DARE DO ANYTHING FUNNY AND I'LL KILL YOU.
YOU STAY HERE AND WAIT.
THANK YOU, RAN.
SO, YOU'VE BEEN WORKING HERE EVER SINCE YOU LEFT THE VILLAGE
YEP. IT'S VERY NOSTALGIC THAT SETSU HAS THE SMELL OF HOME
ALL RIGHT! IT'S DONE. IT SUITS YOU.


OK, LET'S GO
THANKS


NIOLZ VILLAGE?
OKAY, COME IN.
Click
KNOCK KNOCK
LADY KIRA.
THERE'S A GIRL CALLED SETSU FROM NIOLZ VILLAGE WHO WISHES TO SEE YOU.


YOU ARE...?
I'M KIRA
I'M SETSU
I VISITED THAT PLACE A VERY LONG TIME AGO
NIOLZ, WHAT A NOSTALGIC NAME
I'M LOOKING FOR A GUY WHO WENT MISSING FROM NIOLZ VILLAGE


WHAT DO YOU REALLY KNOW?
DID YOU MEET WITH A YOUNG MAN CALLED LUCARIA WHILE YOU WERE THERE?
clench

EVERYTHING ABOUT HIM, NO MATTER HOW INSIGNIFICANT IT SEEMS
I KNOW THIS IS VERY UNREASONABLE, BUT YOU MUST TELL ME PLEASE.
I REALLY WANT TO TELL YOU, BUT IF I SAY IT OUT LOUD, SOMEONE'S POSITION WOULD BE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER.

...I SAW HIM ONCE WHEN HE WAS YOUNG.
I WANT TO FIND HIM NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES

I KNOW HE'S THE CHILD OF THE OLD KING'S CONCUBINE

AND I ALSO KNOW THAT THE LUCARIA KAZUNA BROUGHT BACK WAS ANOTHER PERSON.

I KNOW ALL OF THAT.

HE PROBABLY DOESN'T KNOW THAT I HAVE FOUND OUT ABOUT THIS,

BUT I HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT I UNDERSTAND THAT KAZUNA PERSON A LITTLE BIT

HE MUST HAVE OPINIONS OF HIS OWN,

SO I INTEND TO OBSERVE QUIETLY ON THE SIDELINES FOR NOW.

JUDGING BY YOUR TONE OF VOICE, YOU SOUND LIKE YOU ALSO KNOW THIS SECRET, HUH?

WHO ARE YOU, REALLY?

...THEY TOLD ME
"LUCA" AND HIS MAJESTY "LUCARIA"
WE ARE ALL FROM THE SAME VILLAGE
SETSU,
WILL YOU PROMISE ME ONE THING?
PLEASE FIND THE REAL LUCARIA.

ONLY YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH THIS TASK.
.. I WISH TO SAVE THOSE CHILDREN.
...
I'LL GIVE YOU SOME MONEY.
WHY DID YOU GO ALL THE WAY TO NIOLZ VILLAGE TO VISIT HIS MOTHER?
BACK THEN,

TO ME,
I JUST WANTED TO SEE HER
THERE WAS NO SPECIAL REASON
SHE WAS MY ONE AND ONLY IMPORTANT FRIEND.
SETSU
HOW WAS IT?
A VERY NICE-SMELLING LADY...
daze
thud

The only one
That hurts!
What?
SMACK
He was his only friend and also his savior
That's what his majesty said.
No one in the village
knew of his existence.
...
ALL RIGHT! LET'S GO!
What happened?
startled

AND THE BOY UNDER THE BRIDGE... AH! THERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN SUCH A PERSON!

LUCA? WHAT A FAMILIAR NAME I THOUGHT YOU WOULD KNOW BEST ABOUT HIM, RIGHT?

DO YOU KNOW ANY-THING ABOUT LUCA AND THE BOY WHO LIVED UNDER THE BRIDGE?

OH, YEAH! RAN.

...?

YOU COULD SAY IT WAS BY CHANCE

HUH? WAIT.

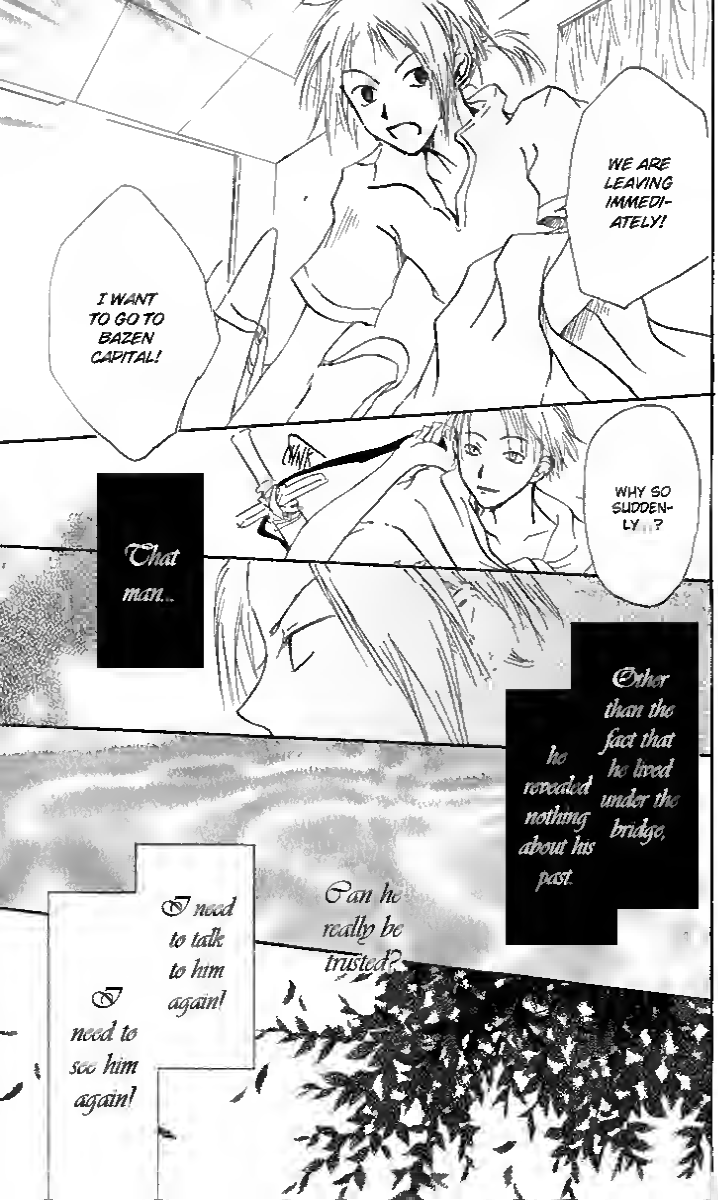
I RE-MEMBER COMING UPON A STRANGE SCENE ONE DAY...

SETSU, THAT BOY...

HE WAS TEACHING LUCA SWORD SKILLS!

HUH?

IS THAT SO...?
YEP! I ORIGINALLY THOUGHT HE WAS A WANDERING VAGRANT, SO AT THAT TIME I WAS AFRAID OF HIM.
ALSO,
WHEN HE SENT LUCA OFF,
THE LOOK IN HIS EYES WAS SO SCARY...
BAM
Thud Thud Thud Thud Thud
DORI!!
SETSU, HOW WAS IT?
"Honestly, when Luca went missing from the village, I thought that he might have been the one who did it."


WE ARE LEAVING IMMEDIATELY!
I WANT TO GO TO BAZEN CAPITAL!
WHY SO SUDDENLY...?
That man...
Other than the fact that he lived under the bridge,
he revealed nothing about his past.
Can he really be trusted?
I need to talk to him again!
I need to see him again!

...is that person.

The Scarlet Chair

by Midorikawa Yuki

Brought to you by

Dragon Voice

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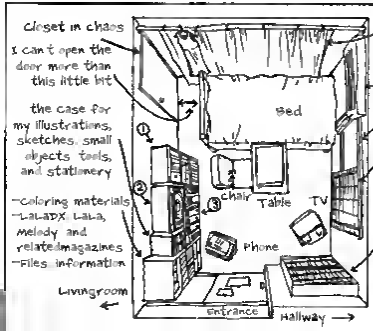
HIIRU NO ISU

THE SCARLET CHAIR

ACT 2

Bazen Capital

My Current Workroom



I like changing the position of things, but this is the one I am most satisfied with.

I'm on a journey to find a person.
AMA-ZING!
SO MANY PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE PLACE ARE GATHERED HERE
THIS MAKES A COUNTRY BUMPKIN LIKE ME EXCITED.
DORI, WHAT ABOUT YOU?
AH! SETSU, IN THE CAPITAL, PLEASE CALL ME "HANSEL."
My fellow traveler, Dori, seems to be a warrior-in-training, but...
WELL, THERE ARE MANY REASONS.
WHAT?
Why a fake name...?
I'M GOING TO LOOK AROUND FOR A BIT
Be back in ten minutes.
His real intentions are still unknown
That's so hard to remember!
"Hansel"
That's the point.
Han...?
What are you trying to do...?

He lived in a small, poor village where a big bridge extends across it.

He was...

...just a simple, kind boy

SETSU.

"Lucaria" is that person's name,

the child of the king's concubine, the last of the royal bloodline

But, up until five years ago...

SHOULD I TAKE THIS CHANCE TO SEE IF THERE IS ANYONE FROM MY VILLAGE?

The person I'm looking for is...

is a very, very important childhood friend.

I GOT PAYED FOR THE HARVEST TODAY.
WANNA MAKE A BET?
HM?
GUESS WHICH HAND IS HOLDING THE COIN.
IF YOU GUESS RIGHT, YOU WIN.
SETSU
LUCA
WHAT IF I DON'T GUESS RIGHT?
THEN YOU HAVE TO LISTEN TO MY ONE REQUEST. HOW'S THAT?
ALL RIGHT! YOU'RE ON!
AND THE THING I HAVE IN MY HAND...
...WILL BE YOURS.

THIS ONE?
HM THIS ONE!
TOO BAD. WRONG GUESS
DAMN IT!!
UGH
sweat
sweat
sweat
trudge
trudge
She ended up helping to carry things.
You ok?
flop
YOU WANT TO MAKE ANOTHER BET?
GOOD WORK, SETSU.
SO SO TIRED...

hm...
hmm...
This one...?
This one?
I'LL DO IT!
AS THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, I'VE DOUBLED THE COINS THIS TIME!
...NO. I NEVER WIN BETS WITH YOU, LUCA...
clink
THANK YOU, LUCA!!
It's pretty!
THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S YOURS.

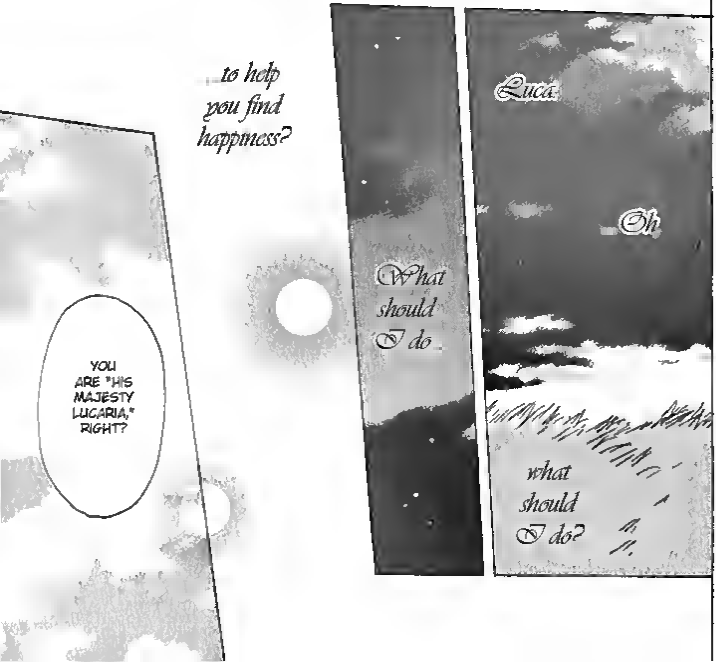
SETSU, DID YOU DRINK IT TOO?
I'M HOME!
MOM, HOW ARE YOU TODAY?
Really?
I'M A LOT BETTER.
COULD IT BE THE EFFECT OF THE MILK KOU'S MOTHER GAVE US?
YEAH, I DID
IT TASTED GOOD
SETSU, COME HERE
hug
Ah,
AH... WHAT SHOULD I DO...
I'M SORRY, SETSU
MOM CANNOT LEAVE ANYTHING FOR YOU
...TO HELP YOU FIND HAPPI-NESS?

WOW! I'VE SAVED UP QUITE A BIT
AFTER THAT TIME, WE MADE A LOT MORE BETS AND I WON EVERY SINGLE TIME
So pretty
...
I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE I WANT TO KEEP THEM FOREVER
THE THINGS THAT LUCA HAS GIVEN ME
WITH THIS MUCH AND A LITTLE MORE, MAYBE I CAN BUY MEDICINE FOR MOM...
"These coins belong to Setsu!"

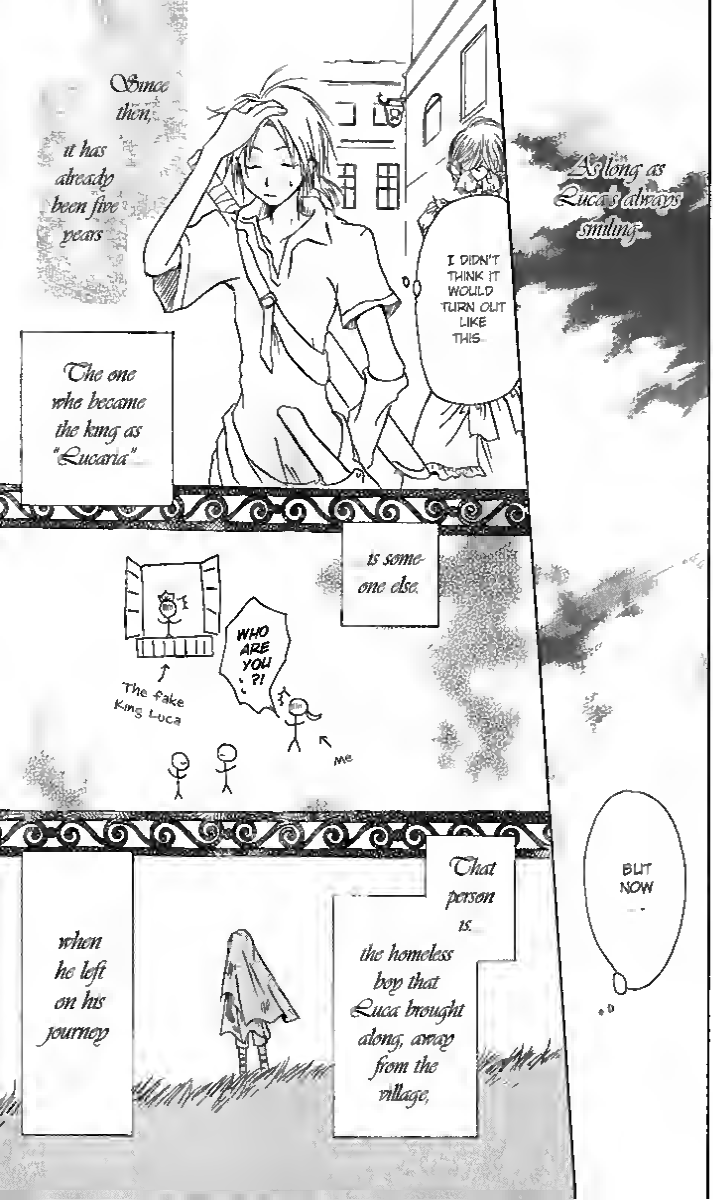
"Luca?"
"Oh! He's resting at that tree over there."
"That kid has been overworking himself lately."
"He's over training to get the prize money for the Martial Arts Competition... he's already dizzy with fatigue."

His face
is so pale!
had coins in both of his hands.
Ever since the second bet, he has definitely
Luca's not the type to take risks
....
SE-TSU?

hug
what have I been looking at?
What
Luca


to help you find happiness?
Luca
Oh
What should I do
what should I do?
YOU ARE "HIS MAJESTY LUCARIA," RIGHT?

PLEASE RETURN TO THE CITY WITH ME
MY NAME IS KAZUNA I'VE COME FROM THE PALACE TO WELCOME YOU.
...I thought, at that time,
...if he could only enter the royal family,
I
Luca would have a much more fortunate life...
compared to life in this village, for sure.
That's why I was able to see you off, Luca!
No matter how far apart we were, it would be all right.


Since then,
it has already been five years
I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD TURN OUT LIKE THIS...
As long as Luca's always smiling...
The one who became the king as "Lucaria"
is some-one else.
WHO ARE YOU ..?!
The fake King Luca
Me
BUT NOW ...
when he left on his journey
That person is...
the homeless boy that Luca brought along, away from the village,

He, instead Luca, whose whereabouts became unknown after an ambush,

together with Kazuna, protect the Scarlet Chair as they await Luca's return.

THE INCIDENT IN WHICH LUCA WAS ATTACKED IS SOMETHING I ONLY HEARD ABOUT FROM HIM AS WELL

I believed this story that he quietly confessed to me,

and I stepped on this journey in search of Luca.

But somehow, he doesn't seem to be just an ordinary orphan.

Now that I have some doubts about him...

...those two are both in on it...?
thump
thump
In order to get the king's chair into their hands, they... to Luca... could they have...
thump
SETSU!
thump
did Luca really even leave the village?
thump
everything has become very suspicious.
thump
Did someone really attack Luca? Or...?
thump
I should also pay attention to what Kazuna will say to me
thump
...No! But what if...
thump
In the first place,
thump

!
GEN!
I'M HERE TO CHECK OUT THE OLD BOOKS MARKET
Long time no see
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO, BUT YOU OUGHT TO COME BACK TO THE VILLAGE
THE GIRLS ALL MISS YOU!
THIS IS GREAT...! I WAS JUST LOOKING FOR PEOPLE FROM THE SAME VILLAGE...!
HUG
WAH! DON'T DO THAT! WE'LL BE MISTAKEN FOR HOMO-SEXUALS!
No one can tell you're a woman!
Don't come near me!
THE ORPHAN UNDER THE BIG BRIDGE?
OH! THE GUY LUCA OFTEN TOOK CARE OF
I HEARD THAT HE APPARENTLY CAME FROM A CITY NEAR THE BORDER
A CITY NEAR THE BORDER ?
IT'S A CITY THAT CHURNS OUT MANY OUT-STANDING WARRIORS.
IT'S SUR-ROUNDED ON FOUR SIDES BY A CITY WALL AT ONE POINT, IT WAS SO POWER-FUL THAT THERE WERE SPECULA-TIONS THAT IT WOULD BECOME INDEPENDENT
WORRIED THAT THE CITY WOULD DECLARE INDEPENDENCE, THE BAJI FAMILY SPREAD RUMORS SAYING IT WAS A "CITY OF TRAITORS."

...IT'S NOTHING
...WHAT'S WRONG? YOU DON'T LOOK WELL
Wipe Wipe
IN THE END,
THAT CITY WAS DEMOLISHED BY THE ROYAL ARMY.
...
the heavier this feeling of foreboding becomes in my mind
The more information I find out
However
setsu, sorry for making you wait!

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE
"HAN-SEL."
A-B
GR
HAN-SEL...
Sorry!
DORII! IS THERE ANY WAY TO SNEAK INTO THE CASTLE...?
THERE'S A RESTAURANT OVER THERE THAT LOOKS PRETTY GOOD...
HUH?
THAT IS, IT'LL BE IMPOSSIBLE IF YOU TRY TO SNEAK IN SECRETLY.
IS THAT SO...
EVEN FOR ME IT WOULD LIKELY STILL BE IMPOSSIBLE!
SNEAKING IN SECRETLY WOULD DEFINITELY BE IMPOSSIBLE.
I GOT THIS THING OVER THERE JUST NOW...
YOU WANNA TRY IT?

❋ Foreword 80 pages

ACT 3 actually allowed me to write 80 pages! During the magazine serialization, there were people who were happy for me after reading the preview, but there definitely were also people who thought, "Hey! Is that OK?" and were worried. It's a great thing to have sufficient pages to use, but at the same time, I definitely cannot let readers think I'm wasting the precious pages in the magazine. That's why I was considerably nervous.

I've never researched for 80 pages before, so this time, in a flustered state, I used my brain to set down a plan of action—on which page should I draw what, how should I set the pace of the story so it would not be too quick or too slow, and so on. I broke out in a cold sweat many times. Fortunately, my editor gave me many suggestions. As expected, it's very fun to foreshadow the content. I wonder if the end result could be considered good, huh? I've completed another dream I've always wanted to try.

I know everyone's tastes are different, but if I could be considered as a necessary author to the magazine, then that really would be wonderful!

NEXT CHAL-LENGER, COME FORWARD!
SKIP
HEY, BRAT! DON'T FORCE YOUR-SELF!
You'll get hurt!
chatter
chatter
WHAT'S THIS? THE RED CON-TENDER IS JUST A KID!
AS SKINNY AS A GIRL!
AND THEN,
I MUST WIN THIS, NO MATTER WHAT
START!
RUSH
I will go see His Majesty!!

WHACK
WAH
WIN...
WINNER, RED!

tweet!
Please take your lunch breaks!
No more energy
pant
pant
SMA
AAHH
Whack
AAHH
SO SETSU, YOU HAVE MANAGED TO CONTINUE ADVANCING SOMEHOW
H-HOW ABOUT YOU?
OF COURSE I HAVEN'T LOST!
...
I JUST HOPE I DON'T HAVE TO GO UP AGAINST YOU, DORI!
HA HA! YOU'RE REALLY TRYING HARD!
IT'S BECAUSE THE PERSON THAT I MUST TALK TO IS IN THE CASTLE!
I SEE ...
YOU REMIND ME OF AN ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE IN THE PAST,
WHO ALWAYS CHARGED TOWARD THE GOAL NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENED
THAT PERSON HAD A MYSTERIOUS CHARISMA AND WAS FAR MORE SKILLED THAN I AM...
ALWAYS DRESSED LIKE A BOY...

IT WAS SUCH A PITY SHE DIED SO SOON.
IN A SINGLE INSTANT, HER HEAD FELL TO THE FLOOR
BUT SHE WAS ACTUALLY A GIRL
THIS IS ALSO CONSIDERED BEING CONSIDERATE TO THOSE WHO CARE ABOUT YOU.
IF YOU CAN RETREAT, THEN RETREAT.
YOU SHOULDN'T FORCE YOURSELF TOO MUCH EITHER, SETSU
I JUST SAID...
IT ONLY APPLIES IF THERE'S SOMEBODY WHO CARES ABOUT YOU
CAN YOU RETREAT?
HOW ABOUT YOU, DORII?

I DON'T HAVE ANY OF THOSE ALREADY...

I'VE GOT NOTHING TO LOSE ANYMORE...

NOW, THE COMPETITION WILL START ONCE AGAIN.

GROUP 1, PLEASE COME FORWARD.

RED, SETSU.

WHITE, HANSEL

SIGH

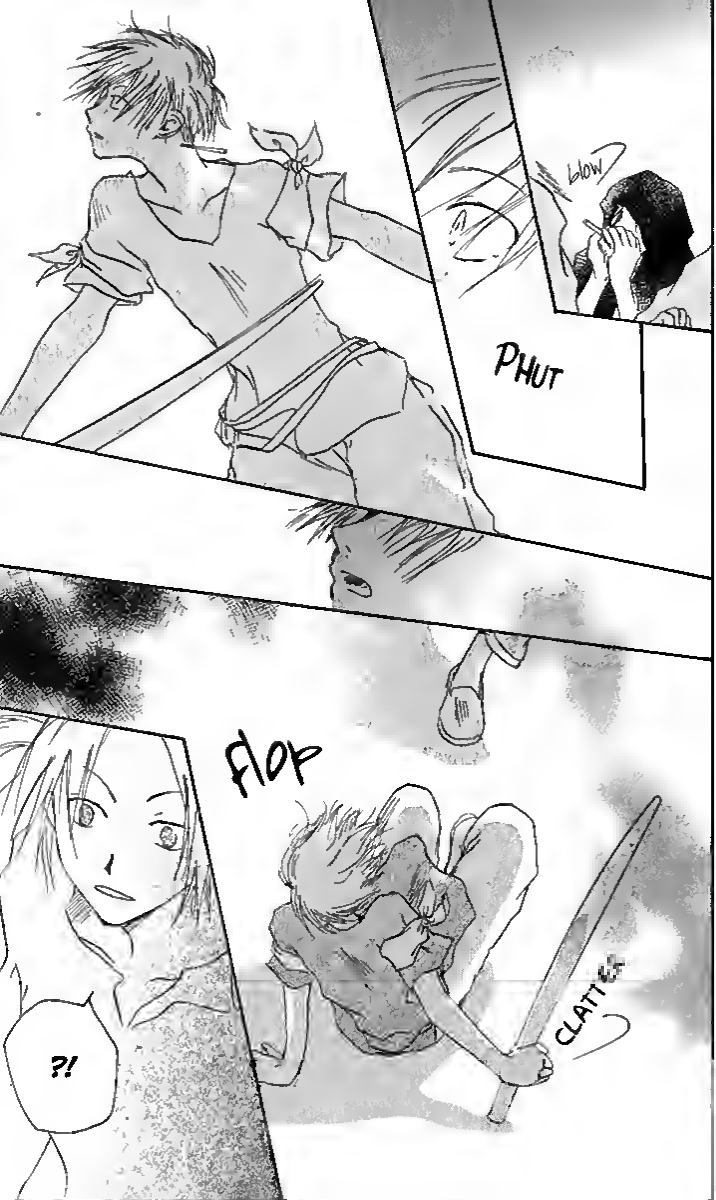
THIS JUST *HAD* TO HAPPEN...

THE WORST POSSIBLE LUCK

have no reason to retreat.

I already

PUSH
There's only the goal!
BEGIN!
grm


WOW
PHUT
FLOP
CLATTER
?!

WHITE CONTENDER HANSEL FORFEITS
JUDGE
I USUALLY DO TOO MANY BAD THINGS, SO IT'S PROBABLY SOMEONE'S REVENGE!
don't call a doctor!
YOU GOT A POISON NEEDLE SHOT AT YOU?
DON'T MIND ME HURRY ON BACK TO THE COMPETITION AREA.
BUT...
DON'T WORRY, I HAVE THE ANTIDOTE
I USUALLY TRY TO STAY AS INCONSPICUOUS AS POSSIBLE, BUT I GUESS I GOT TOO CARRIED AWAY THIS TIME...

SETSU
THAT'S MY REAL NAME.
"DORII"
YOU'RE IN DANGER, SO YOU USED AN ALIAS, HUH?
YOU SHOULD GO
I ACCIDENTALLY LET IT SLIP IN FRONT OF YOU
I'M REALLY HAPPY THAT I COULD MEET YOU
hug
THANK YOU, DORII!
DON'T GET SO CLOSE TO ME

I'M BAD AT DEALING WITH WOMEN LIKE YOU.

SETSU!

YOU'RE HERE AGAIN.

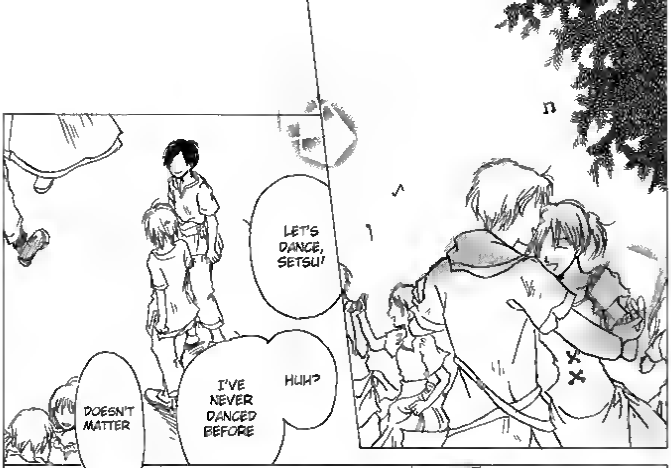
"... Setsu!"

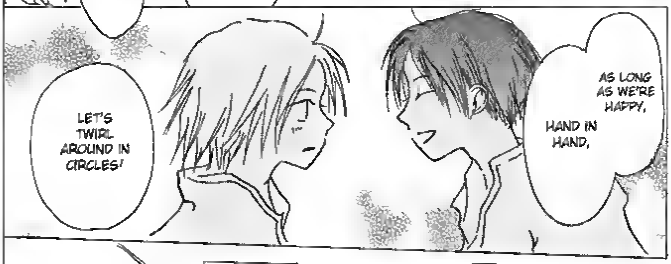
...LUCA.

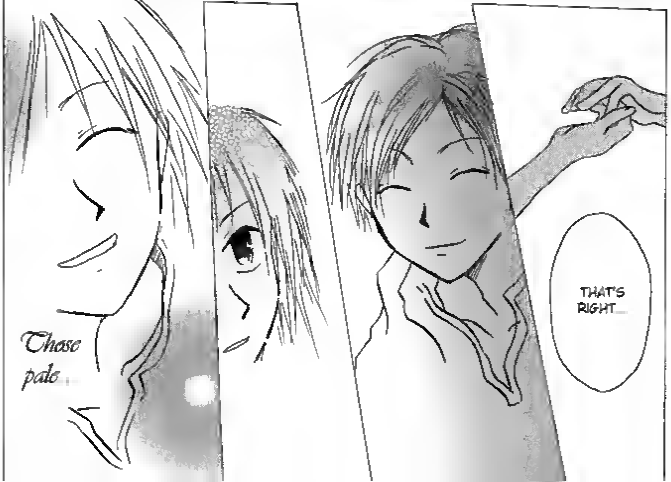
WAH...

WHAT A MISERABLE FACE.

LUCA, WHEN YOUR MOTHER PASSED AWAY, DID YOU FEEL LIKE THIS, TOO...?
SETSU...
I FELT SO SAD I COULDN'T STAY...
AT HOME THERE ARE TOO MANY MEMORIES OF MOM.
NOW, WHAT I CAN'T BEAR TO SEE IS THIS SAD EXPRESSION OF YOURS
WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO MAKE YOU SMILE AGAIN?
...NOT REALLY.
WHEN I THOUGHT THAT I WOULD NO LONGER HAVE TO SEE MOM'S LONELY EXPRESSION, IT ACTUALLY FELT A BIT EASIER INSTEAD
...
TODAY IS THE HARVEST FESTIVAL. LET'S GO TAKE A LOOK AND GET YOUR MIND OFF OF THESE THINGS, SETSU!


LET'S DANCE, SETSU!
HUH?
I'VE NEVER DANCED BEFORE
DOESN'T MATTER


LET'S TWIRL AROUND IN CIRCLES!
AS LONG AS WE'RE HAPPY,
HAND IN HAND,


THAT'S RIGHT...
Those pale...

There's nothing I want anymore

Not the prize money, nor the coins in both hands

and skinny hands of his

Forever...

If we could just be together forever.

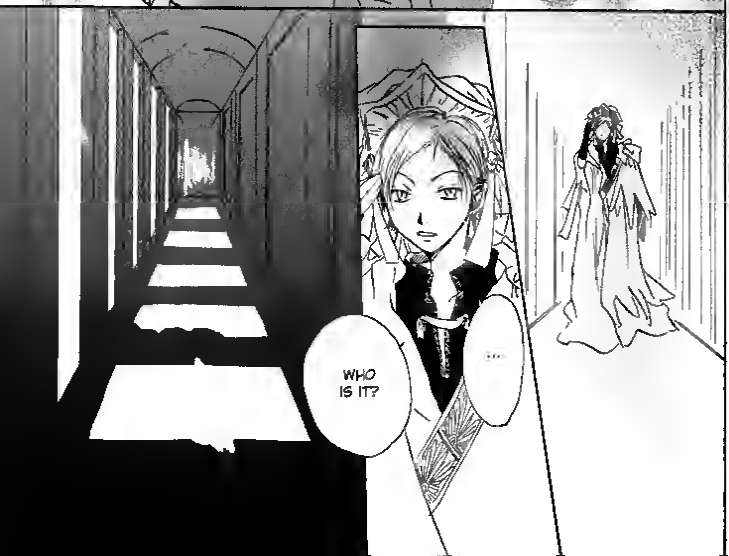
If only... Luca could be beside me...

I thought that I could say them at any time.

These kinds of things

I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO HIM
WHERE IS HE NOW?
YOUR MAJESTY
YOUR MAJESTY LUCARIA, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I'M LOOKING FOR KAZUNA
YES, I'M OK NOW.
DID YOUR FEVER GO DOWN ALREADY?
HE'S IN THE HALL CONFIRMING THE LIST OF GUESTS COMING TODAY
BECAUSE TODAY, CHEFS AND MUSICIANS FROM FAR AWAY ARE INVITED AS WELL

EVER SINCE HIS MAJESTY'S CORONATION, HE HAS BEEN WORKING WITH NO TIME FOR REST.
HE MUST HAVE EXHAUSTED HIMSELF
EVEN SO, HE'S STILL VERY PRETTY.
HIS MOTHER WAS ALSO A BEAUTY, EVEN THOUGH HE DOESN'T REALLY RESEMBLE HER.
IT MUST BE BECAUSE HE INHERITED A VERY STRONG ROYAL BLOOD-LINE.


...
WHO IS IT?

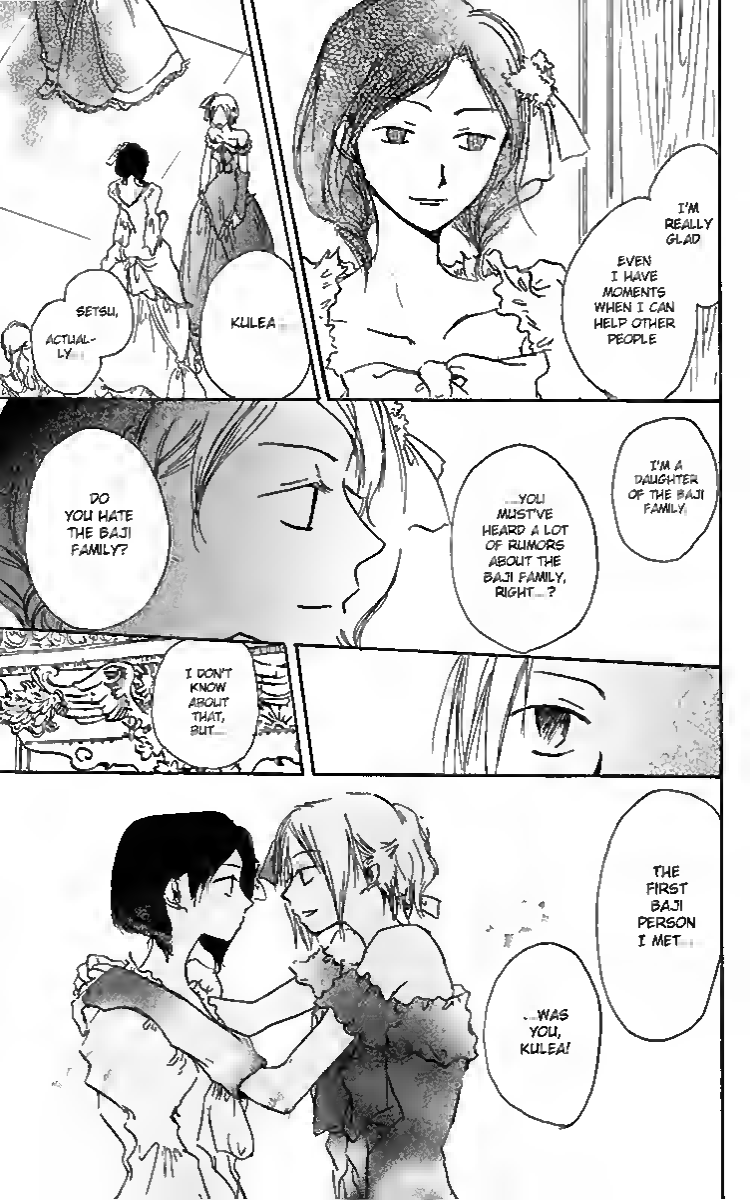
I'M HERE TO TALK TO YOU AGAIN.
WHO EXACTLY ARE YOU?
...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
YOUR MAJESTY PRACTICALLY DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING RELATED TO YOURSELF

IN ORDER FOR ME TO BELIEVE WHAT YOU TOLD ME LAST TIME,
I THINK I NEED TO CLEARLY UNDERSTAND YOU, YOUR MAJESTY
ABOUT LUCA
YOU TAUGHT HIM HIS SWORD SKILLS, RIGHT?
HOW DID YOU, SUPPOSEDLY JUST AN ORDINARY HOMELESS PERSON, POSSESS SUCH HIGH SKILLS?
WHEN DID YOU FIND OUT THAT LUCA WAS ROYALTY?
SPEAKING OF WHICH,
YOU DEFINITELY DIDN'T HAVE ANY BAD INTENTIONS, RIGHT?
...DESTROYED YOUR HOMETOWN, IS THIS TRUE?
SEEING AS HOW BAJI AND THE ROYAL HOUSE...

ALL YOU'VE DISCOVERED ARE RUMORS ABOUT ME?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE USELESS!
WHO IS THIS PERSON ?!
YOUR MAJESTY...!
RUN
RUN
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
GO AND ATTEND THE PARTY TO PASS SOME TIME
YOU GUYS TELL THE MAIDS TO COME HELP HER CHANGE CLOTHES!
WHAT?!
WHA-
I'M SORRY, BUT I'M VERY BUSY TODAY
I DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO TALK TO YOU, SETSU.
DAMN
This is hard
THIS IS MY GUEST

Wah! Let go of me! Don't run away! Your Majestyyy!! Hey!!!
...
HUH?
WAH! WHAT'RE YOU GUYS DOING?!
Change over there
COME THIS WAY, PLEASE!
...
...
HUH?
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS MAKING A RACKET ABOUT...?
SETSU?
ANYWAY, PLEASE CHANGE FIRST.
EXCUSE ME, BUT IT'S NOT THE TIME TO BE SO CARE-FREE...!

KULEA!
SETSU!!
KULEA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I SHOULD ASK YOU THAT! I WAS STROLLING AROUND THE CASTLE BEFORE GOING TO THE PARTY.
Hard to run in this.
THANK YOU A LOT FOR LAST TIME. I WAS VERY FORTUNATE THAT YOU WERE THERE.
SETSU, YOU REALLY DO APPEAR EVERYWHERE
REALLY?!


I'M REALLY GLAD
EVEN I HAVE MOMENTS WHEN I CAN HELP OTHER PEOPLE
KULEA...
SETSU, ACTUALLY...
I'M A DAUGHTER OF THE BAJI FAMILY.
...YOU MUST'VE HEARD A LOT OF RUMORS ABOUT THE BAJI FAMILY, RIGHT...?
DO YOU HATE THE BAJI FAMILY?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT, BUT...
THE FIRST BAJI PERSON I MET...
...WAS YOU, KULEA!

...THANK YOU!
squeal
squeal
AH! HIS MAJESTY IS HERE! ♡

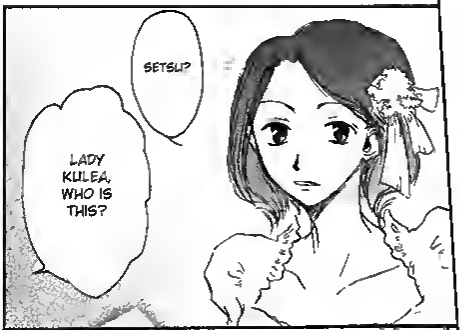
There's even a serialization!

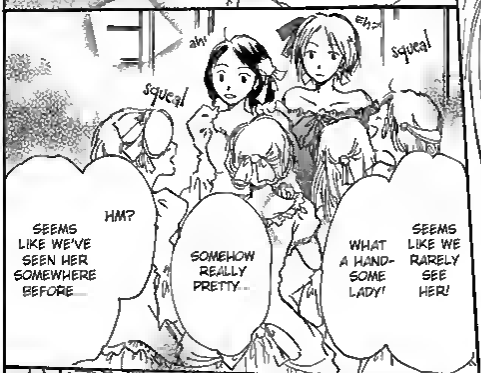
I suppose many of you have already noticed that this work is the serialization of my dreams! Different from other series, I have realized that it is very difficult to be able to write serializations. That is why, this time, I am very happy to be able to have this opportunity. It was because of a long serialization I've read that I wanted to become a mangaka. I've always aimed to be able to draw a long series one day, so this really is like a dream...

Because it's a bi-monthly serialization, to make readers wait is a bit hard, so I suppose there are more readers waiting for short stories. This is why I'm doing them interchangeably. But this work is very important to me. I'll work hard, so I hope I can continue drawing as much as possible. I won't worry about whether I will be asked to end it in the middle, but even if that time comes, I will treasure it and make a good ending.

Mm-hmm... I feel so fortunate...

finished





He is already someone who is far, far away from me...

chatter
chatter
setsu.
YOUR MAJESTY
SHE REALLY STANDS OUT...
WHAT IS SHE DOING?
chatter
chatter
FOR A LONG TIME, I HAVE WAITED FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK WITH YOU...
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR CORONATION
YUURI...?
PLEASED TO MEET YOU. MY NAME IS YUURI.
SPEAK ABOUT WHAT?
I'M REALLY SORRY, BUT NOW-
LET'S GO ELSEWHERE TO TALK, YOUR MAJESTY!
THIS PLACE IS NOT TOO CONVENIENT

...
chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter
...

BE CAREFUL, SETSU! THE BAJI ARE STILL SCHEMING AFTER HIS MAJESTY.
ESPECIALLY IN THESE KINDS OF SITUATIONS
!
This one is tasty
chatter
chatter
EH? HIS MAJESTY IS NOT HERE.
HUH?
BAJI USUALLY USES PROFES-SIONAL ASSAS-SINS.
RIGHT NOW, THERE AREN'T ANY SUSPICIOUS LOOKING PEOPLE, SO IT'S PROBABLY NOT A PROBLEM YET...
chatter
chatter
chatter
THANK YOU, KUREA.
I'M STILL WORRIED, THOUGH, SO I'LL LOOK AROUND A BIT!
I'LL KEEP AN EYE OUT INSIDE THE HALL, TOO

tap tap
tap
tap
tap
tap
" with that person called Setsu "
I want to talk to Your Majesty about "
" what you talked about just now... "
FOR A NORMAL YOUNG PERSON FROM THE COUNTRY-SIDE
TO HAVE SUCH ACUTE SENSES... IS REALLY VERY ODD...
YOU WERE EAVES-DROPPING ON OUR CONVER-SATION
WHO ARE YOU?
AT THAT TIME, I THOUGHT THAT, APART FROM SETSU, THERE WAS ANOTHER SUSPICIOUS AURA...

This guy...!
WHAT DO YOU KNOW?
...OH, WELL
WHAT-EVER YOU HAVE TO SAY,
WE'LL WAIT UNTIL YOU CAN'T MOVE, THEN WE CAN TALK SLOWLY
BUT IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
I'VE HEARD YOUR SWORD SKILLS ARE RATHER GOOD,
...OH, IT CAME ALONG

YES, BUT THAT'S ONLY IF IT'S JUST ME, THOUGH.
IF IT'S JUST YOU, I CAN STILL WIN.
THUD
rattle
...!

YOU DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE YOU WERE SURROUNDED, SO YOU MUST BE FEELING CONSIDERABLY UNEASY.

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH,

SOMEBODY SAID THEY ONCE SAW YOU AT SOME PLACE.

ACCORDING TO THIS PERSON,

YOU DID NOT GROW UP IN NIOLZ VILLAGE

NEITHER IS YOUR NAME "LUCARIA."

SO WHY WOULD YOU SUCCEED TO THE THRONE?

THAT PERSON IS VERY INTER-ESTED

WHO IS PULLING STRINGS IN THE BACK-GROUND?

OR IS IT YOUR OWN PERSONAL AMBITION?

WHACK
THAT PERSON REALLY WANTS TO HAVE A NICE TALK WITH YOU, SO YOU MUST DEFINITELY COME WITH US, ALL RIGHT?
!
NO...!
YOUR MAJESTY THE KING
SWISH
SE-TSU
THUD
?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
YOUR MAJESTY!

whoosh
!
DON'T ESCAPE! YUURI...
!
THUD
TSK
TAP

HEY!
DAMN IT!
FWOOSH

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
What a waste of energy
'CAUSE THESE CLOTHES SUCK FOR MOVING QUICKLY!
...DAMN IT...!
YUURI GOT AWAY
YOUR MAJESTY, YOUR HAND IS BLEEDING
LET'S GO OVER THERE TO TREAT IT.
I'M OK, THERE'S NO NEED
WRAP
WRAP
Who do you think saved you?
HUH?!

WITH YOU HERE, I'M NOT QUITE MYSELF
DO THINGS LIKE THIS HAPPEN OFTEN?
YEAH
BUT TODAY, I WAS TOO CARE-LESS
SETSU,
I DID GROW UP IN A FARAWAY TOWN NEAR THE BORDER.
BUT, TO ME,
THAT PLACE CANNOT BE CALLED A HOMETOWN.

THAT CITY AMASSED A GREAT FORTUNE USING ITS ADVANCED SWORD SKILLS, AND AFTER CREATING A POWERFUL FORCE, THEY WERE FULL OF AMBITION.
THEY REALLY WERE PLANNING A REBELLION
FOR THEIR MAD AMBITIONS,
THEY ROUNDED UP HOMELESS CHILDREN, AND NOT REGARDING THEM AS CHILDREN,
PUT THEM THROUGH SPY TRAINING, FORCING THEM TO LEARN SKILLS FOR ASSASSINATION
MY SWORD SKILLS
THAT'S WHY WHEN THE ROYAL ARMY AND THE BAJI INVADED THE CITY,
HOUSES WERE BURNT,
THE CITY WALLS WERE DESTROYED
...AND I...
...CAME FROM THERE.

AT THAT TIME, I WAS FINALLY RELEASED FROM THAT CITY.
BUT,
FROM THEN ON,
THERE WAS ALSO NO PLACE I COULD GO TO
A WIDE WORLD UNFOLDED IN FRONT OF MY EYES,
BUT THERE WAS NO PLACE FOR ME TO GO,
AND ALSO NO PLACE TO RETURN TO
THERE WAS NO PLACE AT ALL FOR ME

I CAN'T REALLY REMEMBER THE EVENTS AFTER THAT

I WAS CAUGHT, I THEN ESCAPED,

AND THEN I STOLE THINGS ALL OVER THE PLACE

BEFORE I REALIZED IT,

I WAS ALREADY UNDER THAT BIG BRIDGE IN THE SMALL VILLAGE

AT THAT PLACE I—

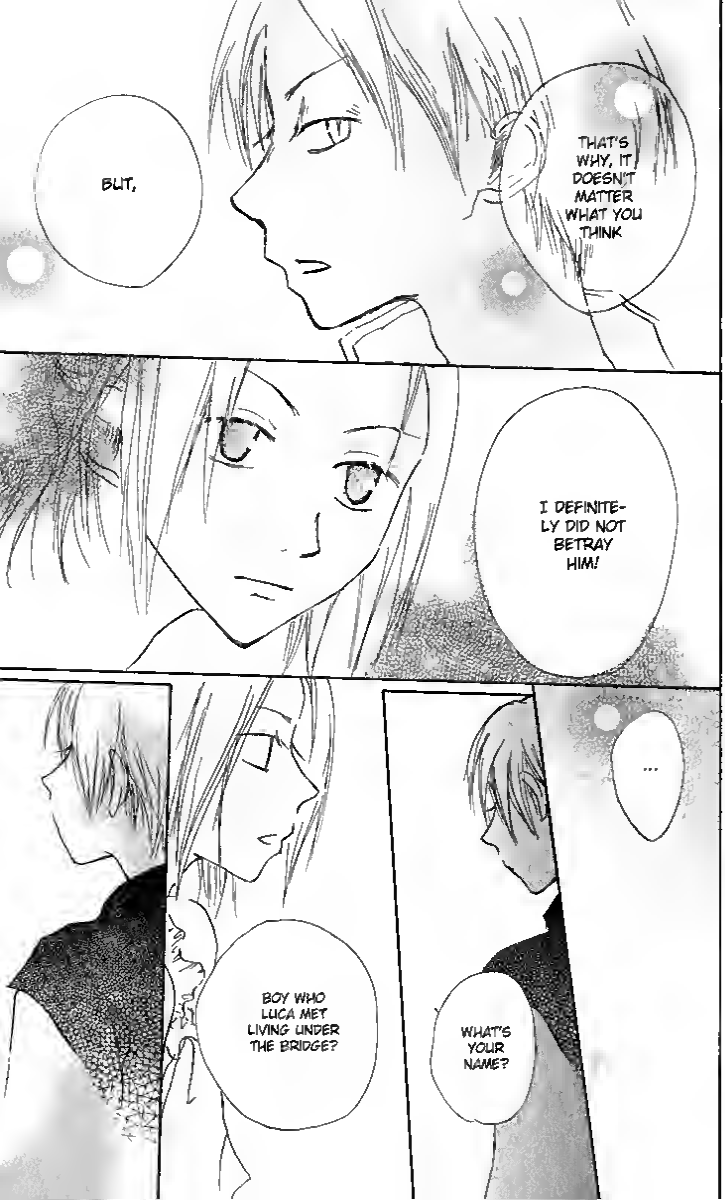
COULDN'T MOVE AT ALL

I THOUGHT I WAS ABOUT TO DIE

ALL ALONE ...

...I THOUGHT MY LIFE WOULD END THERE.
"What's your name?"
But...
"Who are you?"

SETSU,
I REALLY DID NOT TELL YOU EVERY-THING
BUT, WHAT I DID TELL YOU IS THE TRUTH.
THERE WAS NOT A SINGLE LIE
ONE DAY, WE WILL DEFINITELY FIND HIM
FOR HIM, I WILL DO ANYTHING WITH NO HESITA-TION.


BUT,
THAT'S WHY, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU THINK
I DEFINITELY DID NOT BETRAY HIM!
...
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
BOY WHO LUCA MET LIVING UNDER THE BRIDGE?

I'VE ALREADY FORGOTTEN.

I DON'T KNOW...

But just as my heart forever calls out for Luca...

I don't know what it was that tied him to Luca so tightly.

If a lonely person looks into a chasm of darkness,

In his heart, he is probably also calling out for Luca!

and there's only one person.

...perhaps even if this person already ceased to exist a long time ago,

...who gently takes your hand...

even so...

you will wait for him!

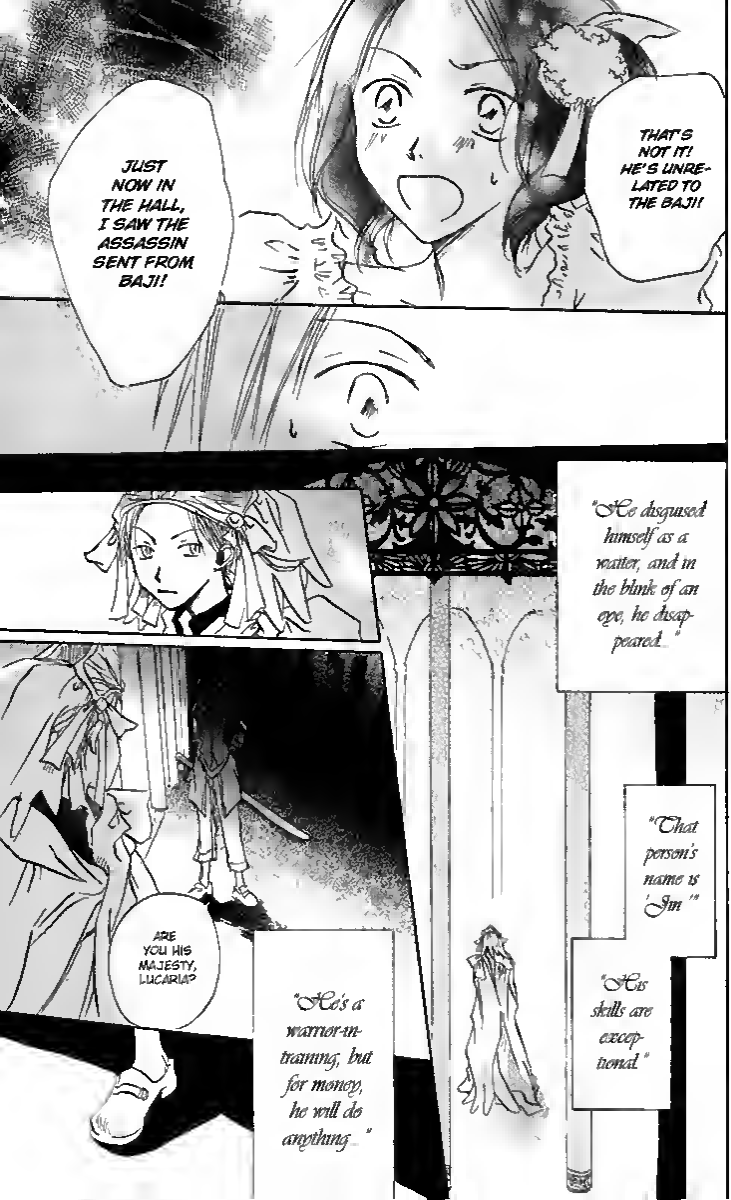
Chasing after his shadow,

Forever...

and ever...

...because...

there is already a feeling inside that cannot be cast away.
YEAH! HE'S OK ALREADY HIS MAJESTY IS NOW ARRANGING A SEARCH FOR THE MAIN CRIMINAL YUURI
IS HIS MAJESTY ALL RIGHT ?!
YEAH.
...YUURI? IS HE AN ADULT?
!
AH!
SETSU!
KULEA!


JUST NOW IN THE HALL, I SAW THE ASSASSIN SENT FROM BAJI!
THAT'S NOT IT! HE'S UNRELATED TO THE BAJI!
"He disguised himself as a waiter, and in the blink of an eye, he disappeared..."
"That person's name is 'Jin'"
"His skills are exceptional."
ARE YOU HIS MAJESTY, LUCARIA?
"He's a warrior-in-training, but for money, he will do anything..."

I'm Doll Jin.
I HAVE NO GRUDGES AGAINST YOU,
BUT THIS IS PART OF MY WORK...
WHOOSH

DORII!
STAB
DORII ...!
!
CLATTER

YOUR MA-JESTY!
PLEASE WAIT!
THIS PERSON IS...
...YOU, TOO?
SETSU, YOU KNOW HIM?
...
PERHAPS ONE DAY YOU WILL REGRET IT, YOUR MAJESTY.
IF YOU DON'T KILL ME NOW,
THIS GIRL IS TOO SOFT-HEARTED

WHACK
YOUR LOOK JUST NOW...
...WAS PRETTY GOOD, SETSU!
!
YOUR MAJESTY!

DORII...!
...NO. IT'S MY OWN FAULT THAT I LET HIM GET AWAY...
KAZUNA!
I'M SO SORRY THAT I WASN'T THERE BY YOUR SIDE!
YOUR MAJESTY!!

SO, ON WHOSE ORDERS DID THAT YUURI COME?
IS IT ONE OF THE REMAINING ACCOMPLICES FROM ONE OF THE INSTITUTIONS I STAYED AT BEFORE?
PROBABLY NOBODY STILL REMEMBERS THOSE TRIVIAL MATTERS FROM WHEN I WAS A BRAT, HUH?
I HEARD THAT THERE'S ALREADY NO ONE WHO SURVIVED THERE. BUT I SHOULD STILL CHECK IT OUT.
RE-GARD-LESS,
I'M GLAD YOU'RE FINE.
YEAH...

IS IT OK FOR YOU TO NOT RETURN TO THE HALL?

YOU'RE REALLY ENERGETIC!

LET ME REST FOR A BIT!

exhale

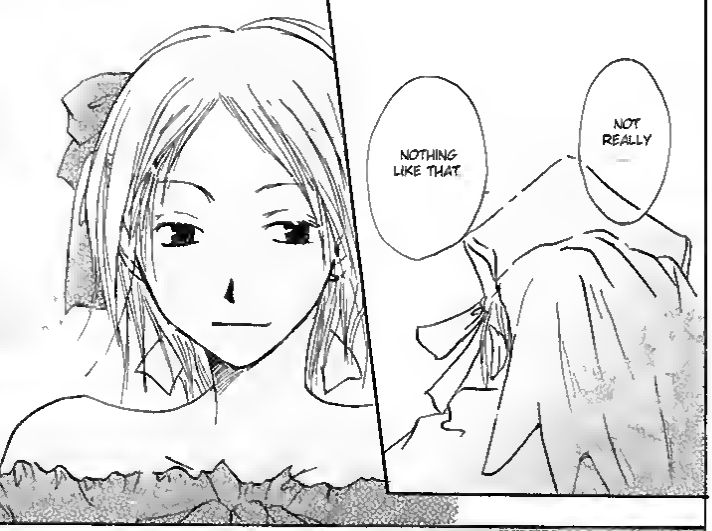
chatter

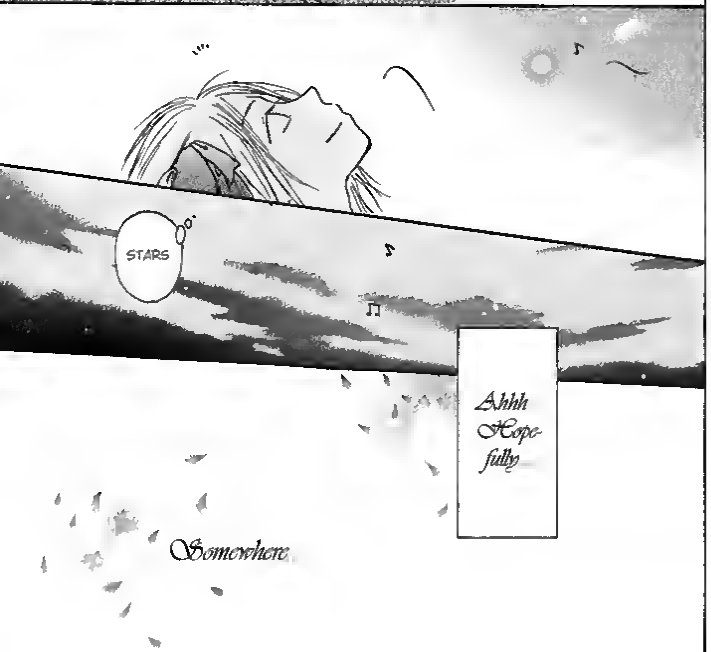
chatter

YOUR MAJESTY, THANK YOU.

YOU LET DORII GO ON PURPOSE.

WHAT FOR?


NOTHING LIKE THAT
NOT REALLY


STARS
Ahhh Hopefully
Somewhere

He is also watching the stars
Hope fully...
He is still living
YOUR MAJESTY
LET'S DANCE!
HUH?

I DON'T KNOW... HOW TO DANCE.
HA HA! THAT DOESN'T MATTER
YOU JUST HAPPILY,
HAND IN HAND,
TWIRL AROUND, AND IT'S OK!
YOU'RE SO RAN-DOM.

ORIGINALLY, I ONLY THOUGHT OF GUARDING THE THRONE FOR LUCA.
I TRIED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO NOT THINK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE.
SETSU, COULD YOU STAY HERE IN THE CASTLE FOR A LITTLE WHILE MORE?
WHY?
BUT EVER SINCE I TALKED TO YOU...
THINKING BACK, THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
IF I HAD TO RESEARCH ALONE
I'D FEEL A BIT SCARED
I WISH TO BORROW YOUR STRENGTH.

...OK.
After this dance is over,
I'll try to ask again!
For Luca's good friend's name

SCARLET CHAIR VOLUME 1 / END

Afterword

The Scarlet Chair

The reason I started writing this series is that I wanted to write a story about a girl who went in search of her childhood friend who's a boy. But then I thought it would be better if the journey was more difficult, so I decided that he would be "the King." And when they finally meet, I hoped the girl's reaction would be very interesting, so the scene became "Who are you? You bastard.!"

Lucaria and Fake Luca

At the beginning, I was very undecided about who should have which appearance. In the end, I still decided that the one who's suitable for the King's outfit is Luca, and the one who isn't as well suited is the fake Luca. For the name, I originally wanted to use only "Luca," but "Your Majesty Luca" doesn't sound nice, so I decided instead on "Lucaria." Also, not only has the fake Lucaria's name not been decided, but for this kind of story about a kingdom, even the kingdom's name is still

Setsu

Although I think her face should be even more girly, I also wanted to avoid stressing the "female main character." Since the faces of supporting characters are usually never used for works with more than three main characters, it was very difficult to draw them. But now, I'm glad that Setsu's face is the way it is

Kulea

The only character with a girl's face. While I was drawing, she was the oasis in my heart. Because her position is very difficult, I especially placed more effort into drawing her. Drawing evening gowns was also quite a pleasure!

Kazuna

He also belongs to the supporting character category (with no slanted or droopy eyes nor feminine eyes). I drew him with the image of a person with a vague impression.

Dorii

A suspicious person right from when he first appeared, I thought that perhaps with inconspicuous clothes and a normal name, readers wouldn't be so wary of him. During the rough draft stages, his front bangs were originally very short, but it was really too distasteful, so it was lengthened... It was a good thing they were made longer..

So, what did you think? If anyone has any comments or suggestions, please definitely tell me. Also, if you have any suggestions regarding this quarter portion, or if you want to read about a short story about anything, you also definitely have to tell me!

But, responses to letters may be so slow that it'll reach a level of rudeness. So, to everyone who mailed to me, I'm really sorry!

To all the readers everyone in the editing department, chief editor Oiki Tamaoru, the employees at the publishing company, friends family and acquaintances, thank you all!

Well, then, I'll see you later! I hope we can meet again.

Hakusensha Lala Editorial Department
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Midorikawa Yuki

2002 9

Afterword/End

The Scarlet Chair

by Midorikawa Yuki

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